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Women in the world of men

José Harris

ROSEMARY DINNAGE

Annie Besant

112pp. Penguin. £2.95.

014086633

PATRICIA W. ROMERO

E. Sylvia Pankhurst: Portrait of a radical

334pp. Yale University Press. £17.50.

030036914

BARBARA CAINE

Destined to be Wives: The sisters of Beatrice Webb

280pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £15.

08200544

PAT JALLAND

Women, Marriage and Politics 1860–1914

300pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £19.50.

019226683

Over sixty years ago G. M. Trevelyan wrote of

the "immense acquisition of moral territory"

added to English public life in the later

nineteenth century by the onslaught of women

like Florence Nightingale. The triumphal tales

of this onslaught have often been told, but only

recently have historians begun to take an interest

in the pains and costs of women's transition

from privacy and domesticity into the public

sphere. As Beatrice Webb's diaries so poignantly

reveal, the story was often less one of triumph

than misery and failure. Religious and psychological

crisis, sexual frustration and childlessness, public

calumny and personal estrangement from family and friends: these

were the all-too-common lot of Victorian and

Edwardian women who aspired to be more, or

other, than dutiful wives and domestic spin-

sters. A heavy price indeed for the posthumous

approval of high-minded progressive historians!

H. G. Wells's notorious caricature of

Beatrice Webb as the sexless robot, Altiara

Bailey, though wholly malicious and in many

respects inaccurate, nevertheless effectively

captured a widely pervasive belief that women

in the public or professional sphere were

mad, cold, charmingless, hectoring and absurd.

Beatrice herself confessed to a share in this

very feeling: she dreaded the emergence of

women as "the rhetorical politician", and the

prospect that "a female Gladstone may lurk in

the dim vistas of the future".

All the books reviewed here deal with some

aspect of this painful transition, though two are

biographies of women who forced their way

into public life, while the other two are collec-

tions of portraits of the more cloistered sphere

from which such women struggled to emerge.

The least ambitious is Rosemary Dinna's

study of Annie Besant, which is a brief, read-

able, coherent survey of Annie's life and

thought, based mainly on secondary sources. It

traces her career, through each of her famous

"nine lives", from her early years as wife to an

evangelical clergyman through loss of faith,

secularism, espousal of birth control, Fabian

socialism and the Bryant and May's match-

girls' strike – culminating in her conversion to

theosophy and ultimate apotheosis as the mid-

wife and matriarch of modern Indian

nationalism.

Annie Besant presents major problems for

any biographer, not merely because her career

spans such an unlikely combination of causes,

but because her charismatic powers found ex-

pression in the now-extinct skill of public oratory.

In the late nineteenth century she was

widely regarded as one of the greatest living

public orators, second only to Gladstone in a

culture where oratory was the dominant public

medium. Dinna's account is a sympathetic

one, and she rightly emphasizes the historian's

duty to assess Annie's life as a whole. "It would

be easy to stress only the parts of her career

that appeal to us – her feminism, her anti-

racism, her struggle for the underdog – and

gloss over what we find irrelevant and absurd."

Dinna herself, however, clearly finds it difficult

to treat Annie's voyage into theosophy as

anything other than a psychic placebo for a

classic case of late-Victorian loss of faith: an

evasion of the hard fact that modern men and

women are inexorably empty and alone.

Superficially, Annie Besant and Sylvia

Pankhurst had much in common – not merely

in their recurrent ideological conversions, but

in their feminism, their violation of behav-

oural norms, their inveterate sectarianism

(both were always quarrelling with their fel-

tial exception being Kate Courtenay, who worked as an East End rent-collector before her marriage). Most of them had a very powerful sense of family, kinship and dynastic identity: yet Caine suggests that they were not markedly successful as mothers and that Beatrice was by no means the only sister who was temperamentally more suited to a public and professional role. The claustrophobic domesticity which her sisters accepted as a universal norm helps to explain why Beatrice (like her contemporaries Sylvia Pankhurst and Annie Besant) found emergence from the chrysalis so crisis-ridden and traumatic.

Yet what is perhaps most striking about this highly structured, all-embracing and self-policing family is the very diversity of attitudes and experience that the lives of the Potter sisters embraced. Their political views (and those of their husbands) included High Toryism, Liberal Unionism, Liberalism and Socialism. Their sexual behaviour varied from life-long marital fidelity to extreme promiscuity. Their religious beliefs ranged from fervent Anglicanism through residual unitarianism to atheism (including, in Beatrice's case, a mixture of all three). Some were coarse and worldly, others were guilt-stricken by, or wholly indifferent to, material possessions. Caine suggests that the differences between them can be at least partially explained by sibling positioning (Lallie being a classic "oldest child", Beatrice the victim of sibling displacement, Rosie the spoiled and petted baby who drove Beatrice from the nest). Beyond this Caine concludes that their lives suggest certain common "tensions, problems and crisis points" endemic in women's roles within certain family structures. Up to a point this is undoubtedly true. But they suggest also a degree of idiosyncratic variety within a single family that simply defies both social and psychological generalization. The peculiarities of the Potter sisters make it easier to understand why social historians and sociologists have so far singularly failed to generate a plausible general theory of the significance and inner structure of the family in the later modern world.

Diversity is also one of the keynotes of *Women, Marriage and Politics*, which is based on the archives of more than seventy major political families. In an admirably incisive and robust study, Jalland ruthlessly cuts away at many of the myths and cobwebs that still enshroud women's history in general and the his-

tory of Victorian women in particular. Though her study includes a number of women driven to permanent sickness by childbirth, spinsterhood and sexual frustration, the general tenor of her work suggests that the lives of most Victorian upper-class women were far more active and rewarding than is usually supposed. Their lives were hedged about by constraints; but within the boundaries of those constraints few were mere passive adjuncts of husbands and fathers, many played a decisive role in shaping their own lives. A carefully monitored marriage market put limits upon the men whom young girls might meet; but within those limits most of them "married for love". Despite a public culture of reticence, the correspondence of these late-Victorian and Edwardian families reveals little inhibition about the private discussion - and enjoyment - of sex. Most of the women in Jalland's survey owned their own property, which was protected by family settlements, so they were unaffected by the obsolete patriarchy of the Common Law.

Incessant pregnancy rather than deliberate male oppression was the main factor in reducing marriage to a form of female illness: and even here many women were more resilient, many husbands more actively caring than is often supposed. In the 1880s no less than in the 1980s many upper-class husbands expected to

be present at the birth of a child. After childbirth, clurching of women was still common but increasingly as a form of family rejoicing rather than of ritual purification. Many of the women in this study displayed amazing fortitude and spiritual resourcefulness in coping with difficult pregnancies, miscarriages, loss of beloved children, and their own deaths. There were, of course, exceptions to all these points. As in all strata and all ages there were ill-matched marriages. Many women who failed to marry were either marginalized or grossly exploited by parents and brothers (W. E. and Mrs Gladstone were notably culpable on this score). But in general Jalland amply sustains her point that, for those who married and even for some who did not, family life was rarely as repressive and limiting as is often supposed.

Her study is equally revealing on the domestic subculture of the world of high politics. Such episodes as Margot Asquith's miscarriages and the interminable squabbles of the Balfours at Whittingham cast an unexpected light upon some of the darker corners of the Edwardian political world. The existence of an Edwardian drawing-room and boudoir culture common to both major political parties is fairly well known; but even so, it is mildly surprising to come across Margot begging Arthur Balfour to intercede with her father to increase her husband's private income so that Asquith need

not resign from the Liberal front bench. While different families the balance of power and division of function between husbands and wives varied widely - some political wives being wholly marginal to their husbands' careers, others acting as political hostesses while others read parliamentary debates, studied social questions and acted as their husbands' private secretaries. Some sisters and daughters, like Elizabeth Haldane and Mary and Helen Gladstone, did the same.

Male views on the "woman question" also varied unpredictably, and bore little obvious relation to political belief. In the Edwardian period, Conservative front-benchers were generally more sympathetic to women's suffrage than their Liberal opponents, and Conservative women were often freer and more forthright than their Liberal counterparts. For Liberals were as active in suffragism as Lady Selborne, who ascribed women's exclusion from the vote to "Whigs, pigs and pigs". No woman mentioned by Jalland had anything but contempt for militant suffragettes: the evidence of this book suggests that the impact of feminist violence on the political establishment was wholly negative. Views about women's personal roles also bore little relation to political ideology: indeed, sexual chauvinism often lurked unexpectedly behind a progressive mask. Charles Trevelyan, for example, brother of the historian, was an advanced radical in politics but wholly unable to respond to his wife's desire for an intellectual as well as sexual partnership. Molly Trevelyan's disappointment at this rejection - and her resolute and dignified self-resignation in coming terms with it - make her one of the most attractive and sympathetic figures in these few books. She took refuge in embroidery and the keeping of a diary (that invaluable escape route from the imperfect marriage).

Pat Jalland's study is a major work. It breaks new ground in the history of the family and of high politics, and at the same time synthesizes the emergence of a new kind of social history, rooted in the best traditions of documentary empiricism, informed by but not subservient to sociological theory. Indeed, its treatment is so successful that one is left with a lurking sympathy for the lamentable view described in my first paragraph: that women struggling with domestic bondage are more interesting, moving and human figures than women embattled in the world of men.



Haile Selassie leading Sylvia Pankhurst to the Ethiopian home which he had chosen for her in 1936. The photograph is reproduced from Patricia W. Romero's *E. Sylvia Pankhurst*, which is reviewed above.

Childhood among the zealots

John Turner

DEBORAH DWORK
War Is Good for Babies and Other Young Children: A history of the infant and child welfare movement in England 1898-1918
307pp. Tavistock, £27.
0 422 60660 X

Edwardian social thought has not worn very well. Even the "progressives" of the first decade of this century contrived to lose the clarity of Mill without gaining the ingenuity of Keynes; while the social philosophy of the right was a cauldron of atavistic fantasies with globs of naked self-interest floating on the surface. Edwardian governments, Conservative and Liberal, occasionally managed to do the right thing for the wrong reasons, but this serendipity was rarely rewarded by their critics, who were more concerned with motives than with practical achievements. Education, public health and social security were sacrificed respectively to religious bigotry, militarism and electoral engineering. Lloyd George and Churchill, the two politicians who did most to create a social policy with tangible and largely beneficial consequences, were visceral and unreflective in their politics, though Lloyd George had a natural intelligence amounting to genius and Churchill could sometimes pass off a rolling cadence as an original thought.

The most pernicious of the wasting diseases which afflicted the Edwardian intelligentsia was the "political language" associated with "National Efficiency". Efficiency, like mother-

hood and patriotism, brooked no opposition. Since very few people were against it, it followed that it meant different things to different people; and the result was a glorious confusion of purpose among contemporaries and a corresponding muddle among historians trying to explain the evolution of politics and policy. Pioneering work by George Searle suggested that there was a "Quest for National Efficiency" between the Boer War and the First World War. Fear of military weakness was a prime mover. Other historians, especially in the United States, took up the idea that the "quest" was actually a movement (sometimes called social imperialism) with a common ideology and some recognized leaders. Unconcerned at the absurdity of implicating almost the whole of the Edwardian political nation in the politics of the radical right, this school has explained a good deal of the political history of the early twentieth century, especially the formation of the Lloyd George coalition, as an expression of social imperialism, as an expression of a terrified governing class to the twin spectres of imperial decline and social unrest. The social imperialist school has more recently annexed the Richard Titmuss tradition of using war to explain major developments in social policy, and takes in the radical feminist argument (associated particularly with Jane Lewis's *Politics of Motherhood*) that early twentieth-century welfare policy was more an instrument for the oppression of women than a vehicle for the improvement of social conditions.

Like most mythology, this has a recognizable, if distant connection with the historical past. Sometimes the desire to restore the prevailing myth even leads historians to the research and discover something new. De-

borah Dwork's study of the development of infant welfare policy, practice and argument between the Boer War and 1918 stands in this respectable tradition. Dwork herself, as her rather arch title tends to illustrate, begins and ends her work in the belief that war and the preparation for war speed the growth of policy. She rehearses the familiar story of the medical examination of recruits during the Boer War, the wallings of Eugenists such as Karl Pearson, and the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration of 1903, which concluded that poor environmental conditions, rather than genetic decline, were weakening the health, and thus the military potential, of the urban population. But she has also immersed herself in what she inelegantly calls the "diarrhoea literature" of the Edwardian years, and can therefore explain the professional discussion of infant welfare issues, and the development of administrative methods for improving the health of mothers and young children, with an unusual authority. Both the medical and scientific establishment on the one hand and the important officials in local and central government on the other were sceptical or indifferent towards the arguments of the eugenicist and social imperialist zealots. Their concern was to improve public health by the best available means; sometimes they would need to speak the language of national efficiency to get practical support for their work.

The debates examined by Dwork are therefore the scientific issues about the disease vector which transmitted infant diarrhoea, or discussions of the relative merits of milk depots, which gave sterilized artificial milk to nursing mothers, and "mothers' and babies' welfare" which offered food to the mother and educa-

tion in breast-feeding and infant care. There is an enormous amount of useful information here, not all of it well digested: some material on the opportunities for increased female employment in welfare services seems to have been included to establish the author's credentials in women's history rather than to advance the argument. The cumulative effect, for all that, is impressive. She concludes that the emphasis on "maternalism", though socially conservative, was the policy most likely to succeed in reducing infant mortality and morbidity in the first years of the century. Her elaboration of the feeble efforts to improve the quality of the public milk supply, and the development and failure of milk depots, makes it difficult to dismiss this as a mere rationalization of male supremacist perspectives.

Other parts of the book leave more to be desired. Dwork is aware that there was something wrong with Edwardian epidemiological research, but does not seem quite sure what it was, and quotes inconsistent and conflicting contemporary statistical analyses without attempting statistical criticism. Perhaps to save space, she also avoids much discussion of the financial and administrative relations between central and local government, and has therefore not really made a study of policy-making except over school meals. Since this might have helped make sense of the social imperialist argument, the omission is unfortunate. Discussion of the First World War, despite the title, is perfunctory.

This book will undoubtedly be read with some benefit by specialists; amateurs and dilettantes left, right or feminist, may find it annoying in its choice of evidence and irritating in its judgments.

Alerts and allegiances

Michael Carver

FRANK KITSON
Warfare as a Whole
186pp. Faber, £8.95.
0 571 14693 7

The pre-publication publicity for Frank Kitson's slender book represented it as likely to cause a major row in the Ministry of Defence because of its trenchant criticisms of Britain's readiness for war, and as possibly committing breaches of security, since the author is the recently retired Commander-in-Chief of United Kingdom Land Forces. That was a gross exaggeration of the book's criticisms and of its importance. With one notable exception - General Kitson's recommendation for a change in the area in which the British corps is deployed in Germany - his criticisms are old hat, and reflect his own background as an infantryman with an extensive experience of (to use the phrase which was the title of one of his previous books) Low Intensity Operations, and a very limited experience of staff work in the Ministry of Defence, or in joint service or Allied appointments. Kitson's great virtue is that, like Montgomery, he is mercilessly direct and objective in his discussion of the problem.

His concern is that too much attention, and too large a slice of the army's slender resources, are devoted to the problem of defending NATO's admittedly crucial Central Front in Germany, and too little to other forms of warfare, such as subversion, insurgency, or conventional and limited war. His analysis, which forms the first part of the book, although it contains some dubious reasoning, is full of sound sense and explodes many myths. Kitson supports an independent British deterrent on the grounds that "If the United Kingdom wishes to be able to act independently of America, or even to opt out of following America on certain occasions, she must have an independent nuclear capability which is

genuinely able to deter any hostile power", a requirement that begs many questions. He is no believer in fighting a limited nuclear war, recognizing that "once a nuclear weapon was used, the likelihood of escalation to disaster would be that much closer". That being so, he stresses that the function of conventional forces in NATO is to gain time for negotiation: the longer the time needed, the stronger they must be. But he believes that the present combination of conventional forces on NATO's Central and Southern Fronts, with their nuclear support, provides a sufficient deterrent, and that, while not weakening that deterrent, we should seek ways by which we could get better value for our defence money and improve our capability to undertake other types of operation. The areas which concern him are our contribution to NATO's Northern Front, operations of various kinds in support of the United Kingdom's interests outside the NATO area, and Home Defence, all issues with which he was concerned in his last two appointments in the army.

Kitson stresses the importance of Norway and Denmark to the defence of the United Kingdom and the weaknesses of their defence. He rightly points out that, if our own contribution to their defence was concentrated on one task, rather than being a "contingency plan" to meet several different ones, it would be more effective. If the British corps in Germany were to be switched from its sector in the North German plain, to exchange places with the German forces which defend Schleswig-Holstein and contribute to the defence of Denmark, not only would Britain's contribution to the latter be greatly improved, but it would significantly reduce the cost of our forces stationed in Germany. In his view, the nature of the terrain would require fewer tanks and more infantry, and the long land-line of communications back to Antwerp would not be needed. He accepts that Britain could not then expect to hold high command appointments in NATO's Central Sector. He does not

discuss the politico-military implications of the Germans assuming responsibility for a wide area of the Central Front, nor of Britain's no longer contributing to it, while becoming responsible for the area including Germany's naval bases and the Kiel Canal.

His enthusiasm for being prepared to undertake operations outside the NATO area is the principal reason for Kitson's wish to change our role within it. He envisages the need not only to be able to conduct Falklands-like operations in support of our own direct interests, but also to come to the help of other countries, threatened by or at war with their neighbours, Africa being the continent in which we are most likely to be engaged. He also sees it as possible that we could be involved in association with the US Rapid Deployment Force in the Middle East.

His whole case rests on the need to give a higher priority to these potential commitments, reversing the trend which was set in motion twenty years ago in our wholesale withdrawal from east of Suez. There is no black or white answer to the question of whether or not his judgment is right, for intervention of that nature depends on the policy which the government of the day chooses to pursue. For the past twenty years governments of both political persuasions have followed a consistent policy of putting NATO and Northern Ireland first, accepting that, if intervention elsewhere became urgently necessary, the forces could be provided from those whose primary function was to meet a NATO task. Events have shown that to have been a reasonable policy, and Kitson fails to make a strong case for changing it.

The other controversial aspect of the book is its strictures on the size of staffs, particularly in the Ministry of Defence, and the excessive age of senior commanders. Kitson is right to emphasize that commanders must be physically and mentally robust and flexible, if they are to stand up to the strains and stresses of modern war. He recognizes that the army faces a

real difficulty in peacetime in reconciling this with the need to offer a full career to officers or would-be officers; but his remedies are too simple and overlook other factors, including the important one of trying to ensure that those who hold higher command and staff posts have had a wide and varied experience. He is himself a case in point. Although he retired as a General at the age of fifty-eight, having commanded a battalion, a brigade and a division, and finally spent five years at Headquarters United Kingdom Land Forces, first as Deputy and then as Commander-in-Chief, his experience was almost entirely connected with infantry operations. He held no post in the Ministry of Defence above the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and had no experience of staff work concerned with personnel, logistics or arms procurement. If his recommendations were accepted, including that for five-year appointments, senior officers would have an experience even more limited than his own. Twenty-five years ago I was inclined to share his views, and pointed out to my subordinate commanders that, if one was to preserve a sense of proportion in the matter, one should recall that the two opposing commanders at the Battle of Waterloo, Wellington and Napoleon, were the same age, forty-six, and it was the last battle for both of them. One of my brigade commanders pointed out in reply that, to view the matter in true perspective, one should remember that Blücher, whose intervention in the battle was decisive, was over seventy and had been rolled on by his horse the day before.

Warfare as a Whole is useful for those with a limited understanding of the problems that the army faces, but its arguments should be taken with a pinch of salt.

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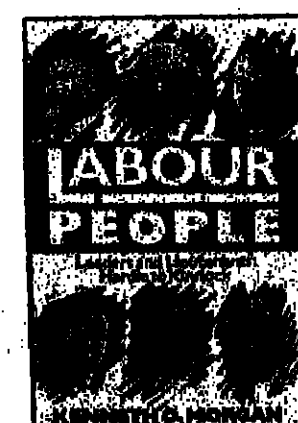
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The big decisions

John Gooch

DAVID FRENCH
British Strategy and War Aims 1914-1916
274pp. Allen and Unwin. £25.
0049421972

David French's book deals with what is commonly described as "high policy", and very welcome it is too. Not much more can usefully be done by way of interpreting the common soldier's experience of war until historians extend their techniques. But over the past decade or so a great deal of material dealing with the making and carrying out of the big decisions about the war has become available to scholars, and a good many monographs and articles have been published on the twin themes of war aims and strategy – though rather more on the former than the latter. A reassessment of the First World War is now due; and this book is an early and important contribution to it.

Dr French takes a fairly conventional view of the purposes for which Britain went to war. She fought to preserve her freedom and independence, and to teach Germany that any attempt to change the map of Europe by force would be both costly and futile. Ending the threat of Prussian militarism meant imposing a victor's peace on Germany; yet defeat could not be of such a magnitude as to destroy, or even severely weaken, Germany and create a power vacuum in central Europe into which Russia might move. This was, as French rightly emphasizes, a self-contradictory aim. Resolving it – if indeed it could ever be resolved – was only one of the problems which bedevilled the integration of strategy and policy. There were others.

For Great Britain, the First World War was not one and indivisible. As well as fighting a European war against Germany and Austria-

Hungary, she also fought an imperial war against Turkey. French's careful analysis displays with painful clarity the contradictions and cul-de-sac into which this parallel war led British policy-makers. The Asquith government's enthusiastic quest for allies, particularly in the Balkans, has always looked somewhat suspect; now it will be hard to view it as anything other than a policy of damaging self-deception.

In dealing with the strategic side of the war, French casts overboard the customary division of soldiers and statesmen into "Easterners" and "Westerners". Instead he divides the soldiers and the "frocks" into two new camps. On one side stood the politico-strategic Fabians: a group which included McKenna and Runciman among its number and was unwilling to commit manpower to the Continent *en masse*, preferring to act according to an outdated concept, deriving from the time of the Napoleonic wars, in which British gold and Continental blood would defeat Germany. Neither of the assumptions implicit in this grand strategy was correct: Britain did not have enough gold and her European allies did not have – or were not willing to shed – enough blood to overwhelm Germany. Against the Fabians was ranged a loose coalition whose leading lights were Kitchener and Lloyd George and which rejected "business as usual" – or at any rate business as much like normality as could decently be managed – in favour of the mass mobilization of soldiers and war-workers.

This throws a different light on the much-reviled strategy of attrition. Instead of being something akin to the remorseless action of two grindstones working against each other until one wears thin and shatters, it now appears to have been a more subtle and Machiavellian scheme by which the forces of Britain's allies would use up the Germans before Kitchener's New Armies delivered the



British observers in a German observation post on the Messines Ridge in 1917.

death-blow in 1917. This policy of "defensive attrition" had to be abandoned early in 1916, when the inescapable need to prop up the Russians and French necessitated a turn to "offensive attrition". The result was the Battle of the Somme.

Analysing strategy chiefly from the point of view of timing and organization means that French steers fairly well clear of contemporary debates about where to fight. Thus his condemnation of the Dardanelles expedition is essentially grounded in the impossibility of ever pulling off its diplomatic goal and creating

a united Balkan front. This leaves open the question with which "Wullie" Robertson continually badgered his political masters: on "bad" strategy – the dispersion of military effort rather than its concentration – ever be "good" policy? This and other strategic issues need further exploration.

Meanwhile, Dr French has given us a work which combines accomplished synthesis and stimulating revisionism. That he remains steadfastly land-bound is a matter not so much for criticism as for regret. His second volume cannot appear too soon.

Play up, play up

Dominic Hibberd

PETER PARKER
The Old Lie: The Great War and the public-school ethos
319pp. Constable. £15.
0094669805

Peter Parker's argument in this interesting but ill-disciplined book is that public-school idealism – "the old lie", a phrase taken from Wilfred Owen, the "Grammar School boy" – was "a major source of the illusions which drew eager citizens into a New Army" during the First World War. The trouble is that any such study which assumes that the volunteers of 1914-15 were all victims of "illusions" is bound itself to propound something of an illusion. Parker remarks that British enthusiasm at the declaration of the war has "constantly baffled later generations . . . Was it simply a matter of absurd optimism . . . or of a concentrated barrage of disinformation?" The question is not answered, nor are further alternatives offered. He rarely mentions Germany, and Belgium does not even appear in his index, but the events of August 1914 cannot all be dismissed as "disinformation". When Asquith said he would rather see Britain "blotted out of the pages of history" than be a "silent witness, which means, in effect, a willing accomplice, to this tragic triumph of force over law and of brutality over freedom", he spoke for very nearly the whole nation.

Possibly there were no significant arguments for the British position; the Oxford academics who put the case in 1914 "should have known better", according to Parker, who dismisses them unheard. Nevertheless, the period leading up to the war makes little sense if the danger from Germany, both real and imagined, is not taken into account. Whether it caused or was caused by British competition, the threat affected many aspects of British life, including the public-school "ethos" itself. When the public-school man affected amused boredom at the OTC, lauded amateurism, sportsmanship and breadth of education, or became serious about religion, he was conscious of the difference between his own values and what was thought to be the Teutonic *Kultur* of militarism, "crazy professors", specialization and godless materialism. There may have been plenty of illusions in all that, but there were numerous German prophecies about the triumph of the blond beast, Prussia's right to dominate the biological necessity of war, and so on, statements which still make chilling reading even when one makes allowance for their British equivalents. Nor were the British unaware of their own determination to stay on top by force if necessary. The Dulwich College magazine, which Parker does not quote, summed up the cause in September 1914 as "Eat, or be eaten", hardly an appropriate slogan for the Last Crusade.

The *Old Lie* is an informative, vigorous and enthusiastic book, but an editor could have sharpened it up by heavy pruning and by encouraging its author not to defer to received opinion. It is disappointing to be taken on the usual run through familiar material, as one has some of these chapters. Rupert Brooke, for example, is disposed of in the standard way, with no recognition that his sonnets expressed a commitment gained at the front. There are lengthy but somewhat irrelevant quotations from the soldier songs used in *Oh! What a Lovely War*. Sassoon and Owen are taken as central rather than unique, although Owen knew very little about the public schools and fervently admired what he did know. Conventional bias against the rulers of the system has some odd results: the Headmaster of Eton is rebuked for having been brave enough to suggest in 1915 that the Germans were human beings, as is that shrewd teacher, Cyprian Norwood, for not seeing that the ideal of "service to the community" represented "a decline in education". Too much ground is covered too fast; one would have liked to pause over new information and to be spared minor confusions (Binyon's "For the Fallen" first appeared in 1914, not 1915; Herbert Asquith's "The Volunteer" was written before the war started; Rugby does have a school song and a Latin one at that). But Parker's enthusiasm gives his book away. He admires those young officers of long ago and is fascinated by the strange schools which bred them. He could have been bolder in showing how public-school values contributed, as they must have done despite their many objectionable qualities, to the extraordinary success of the war generation. Amateur sportsmen, fresh from school, the volunteer soldiers endured the trenches with untiring courage and resourcefulness until they reached victory. To do that, the best of them must have been free spirits and realists, as their writings abundantly demonstrate. There was scarcely a mutineer, monocled or otherwise, against their leadership. Their few protests were on behalf of their men. We take their success for granted, as they did, but our world might have been rather different if they had failed.

A martyr without honour

Kevin Andrews

CHRONIS MISSIOS
Kall, eay skotithikes noris
215pp. Athens: Grammatika.

When Virginia Woolf pin-pointed the secret of style as due obedience to the natural rhythm of the voice in speaking, she was writing of the leisure products of eighteenth-century English men of letters: she will not have foreseen her definition also fitting the prison experiences of a South Balkan Communist who never got beyond the second year of primary school, and whose crime was an active political involvement often punishable with death in the kangaroo courts of Greece's post-war counter-revolution.

I doubt if such a book can be translated; the most accurate equivalent in prison slang will fail, if only because the historical experience of one race has nothing to do with another's. A literal rendering of the title itself ("Lucky you died early") must also fall short of the inconceivable realities of a past remembered still, in Greece, as vividly as an overdose of poison. Nor, for that matter, can alien terms convey the savour of the Greek vernacular. Originally and still essentially a peasant speech – with all of the inherent richness and restrictions – its finest expressions remain the folk ballads of unrecorded ages, a few epics and verse dramas, mostly orally transmitted by illiterate with a memory to make scholars gape, one thundering memoir by a Revolutionary fighter who couldn't spell, a body of expert fiction about simple folk but written by a simple islander in the purist version of the language (perhaps the sole instance of musicality in that creaking idiom), and the internationally renowned poetry of certain intellectuals during the past century and a half. With the exception of Makriyannis and Papadiamandis a hundred and more years ago, or the blessed relaxation of Sefteris's essays and the narrative skill of Tirkas and a very few others since, prose in Greece has lagged behind. In any case these latter authors are writing for an educated or at least a decorous public, or as they might ruminate in private, without the more rasping emphases of common speech.

Chronis Missios sends caution and decorum flying. *Kall, eay skotithikes noris* takes the form of a one-sided conversation with a fellow guerrilla who had the luck to be killed off early, albeit in the horror of the Civil War, and so was spared the misery of disillusion with the official records of the cause for which he gave his life. Missios has paid for his own commitment with a total of twenty-one years in prison, including long periods awaiting execution.

For some readers in the developed world

(including tourists, for whom Greece equals beaches or gigolos, with archaeology for a quick chaser) it may be hard to imagine this same smiling land as the theatre of such prolonged home-grown injustice and luxuriant foreign outrage that, for a sizeable part of the population, an allegiance to Communism has both appeared the one way out and also proved the swiftest road to martyrdom. Bizarre, unpalatable as either fact may be to peoples less mangled or betrayed, the toll in human life has been as enormous as the distortion and squandering of vital energies. And like martyrdom anywhere, it has only generated more martyrs, new adherents, wider polarization and greater numbers of the nameless caught between the clashing rocks.

Yet one of the more painful fates appears to have been reserved, as this book recounts without palliation or self-pity, for those Communists who have survived to witness the *embourgeoisement* of a movement that – notwithstanding errors and atrocities – was once all action. In this later development the torment of many has been set at naught, their endurance publicly dishonoured and a lifelong fight (against a succession of foreign god-fathers, investors and invaders, merciless organs of the local law and other time-serving compatriots) dismissed as treachery by their own friends and leaders. Excommunication has been the destiny of many who dared question too soon the infallibility of Party leadership. The latter would reserve for itself the right to denounce its past mistakes once these had demonstrably failed and history dictated compromise.

As a footnote to history, this book rings loud and clear: it records the experience not of one man only but of hundreds of thousands, through war and armed resistance, revolution and White Terror, civil war and exile, outlawry and bogus peace, the false dawn of social change in the early 1960s and a reversion to barbarism in 1967-74. Contemporary events outside the prison walls are hinted at or referred to in a kind of coded language that every Greek – and to all intents and purposes no foreigner – will understand.

The book is not so much a narrative as the raw stuff of narrative: a quantity of memories, characters, conditions, episodes tossed into a cauldron and stirred with little indication of chronology, and less care for the ingredients boiling over or for the fire scorching the bottom of the pot. There is no division into the convenience of chapters and little differentiation between dialogue, accounts of tortures, the almost casual farewells of those led out to execution, the hilarity that may convulse a prison wing, moments of lyricism than can knock the chair out from under the unsuspecting reader, a steady river of obscenities surfacing in every sentence (not one of which is

forced or ill-constructed), maledictions, red herrings, apologies for the same, and certain unbearable reunions. One paragraph runs for twenty-two exhausting pages, jumping back and forth in time and from one subject to another without noticeable connection.

The flow is punctuated by the author's fulminations against the *kathodhigisi*, or Party training system, though almost nowhere does he enlighten the uninitiated reader on its specific failings. Had he gone into these, the book would have contributed more directly to our understanding of the middle and later years of this century in Greece. It is important none the less as a meticulous guide to survival under extreme conditions, and as a textbook on the horrifying lot of the country's political prisoners since the 1930s – a subject that foreigners with the slightest concern for Greece ignore at their own risk. More important still, despite Missios's occasional lapses into self-promotion (more anathema to the Party leadership than any of his tirades against it), is the humanity evident on every page. This comes out both in his uncontrolled though instinctive expertise with language and in his vignettes of people. He tells in detail of other prisoners who have endured as long as he, or longer, and of the kindness he comes across in unexpected quarters: sometimes a gaoler or, towards the book's harrowing close, one prison officer as psychopathic as Missios admits himself to be, when the electric shock treatment they have both endured gives each a fellow-feeling for the other; or an unknown refugee woman who shelters him when he is on the run during one of his intervals of hunted freedom; or a fellow inmate of old whom he tracks down in an Athenian hospital a few minutes before the man dies of a despair over something larger than a single life – lived (it would seem) to no purpose and given now without the dignity of battle.

On a different scale of things, the giving may have been bigger than the purpose lost – got that the author does anything so crass as to

offer such a consolation.

Before the tonnage of suffering and vastation evoked by a host of cases, and alluded to as a common fate throughout the country on both sides during the period described, judgments by a foreign reviewer are superfluous. Still, two questions come to mind. The book's success at home (thirteen editions within two years, in a land where a single edition of 2,000 is the normal limit) recalls the turn-out of a million and a half Athenians at the funeral of Alekos Panagoulis in 1976, and indicates a similar envy of what one man dared and was able to endure; as if his own lone courage absolved the majority of its prudence, indifference or pursuit of happiness. It is easier to read a book than to survive torture or, from the age of sixteen, to spend half a lifetime in prison. In a country where the public eye is prying consistently through every keyhole and governing all action in the street, there is an envy too (I would suggest) of the author's liberties with written language: a freedom so rebellious, so natural, but in Greece so proscribed and virtually so unheard-of as to make it read like the unthinkable: the rhythms of a human voice.

At one point also – in the infamous Makronisos "Reformatory" – the author does give in, with a gesture he can only justify by the helpless call to a companion in his ordeal: "Yiorgáris, you son of a bitch, stand by me here, because a world without failings might as well be dead." So that was it – I signed.

The reference is to the declarations of repentance that Greece's rougher authorities have sought to extract (under torture, menace to relatives, the threat and reality of execution) from their political prisoners since the Metaxas dictatorship of the 1930s. Yet the resulting ostracism and political excommunication of the survivors may not equal what these have had to feel ever after towards the few who never signed and have died off, forgotten. It may be that shame is the spur, if not to insanity, at least to whatever tenacity or talent is still left to the broken.

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The forums of the ages

Jeremy Waldron

D. W. HAMLYN
A History of Western Philosophy
345pp. Viking. £14.95.
0670802433

What do we want from a history of philosophy? It may perform a sort of encyclopaedia function: we can look up "Empedocles" and find out he believed that the unchanging elements of earth, fire, air, and water could be bound together by love; or if we look up "Epicureans", we will discover that they thought that the gods have no concern with us, death is nothing to us, pleasure is easy to obtain and pain does not last long. As well as these delights, a history of philosophy can provide potted summaries of the thought of major thinkers like Aristotle, Hume and Wittgenstein – summaries which are useful to the general reader even if they are irritating to the specialist.

But we also expect a history of philosophy to tell us a story. Maybe it is a story about the development of a certain field of knowledge: for example, a story about the way formal logic took off in the late nineteenth century in the work of Boole, Cantor and Frege, after having been bogged down forever in the categories of Aristotelianism; or a story about the growth of secular thought and ethical scepticism. But history of this kind can easily become pure "epistemology": who caught what ideas from whom and whom he passed it on to.

One thing that would be interesting would be a history of doing philosophy: that is, an account of what it has been like in the past to think and argue about the meaning of life, the universe and everything, and how that activity – particularly as a specialist activity – has changed over the centuries. Today philosophers are mainly to be found in universities: they are salaried and professionally qualified, and their work proceeds in specialist books, periodicals and conferences which circulate on an international scale but with very limited audiences. In the past, philosophy has been conducted in quite different environments: in informal schools that met in corners of the Athenian market-place, or in monasteries under the auspices and intellectual authority of the Church, or as an aspect of salon life in eighteenth-century cities. What effects have these very different environments had on the business of making an argument, criticizing

and responding to criticism, and developing a sustained and articulated view on issues which, in their very nature, strain the resources and articulacy of thought and language? Why did philosophy move gradually out of one forum and into another? What changes have there been in the dissemination of ideas? Historically, what has determined whether a book succeeded spectacularly or "fell dead-born from the press" like Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*? How have things like being a colleague, being part of a wider community of philosophers and engaging in philosophical correspondence, changed over the years, and what influence have they had on the business itself? D. W. Hamlyn in his *History of Western Philosophy* does not provide a sustained account along these lines, but his book is enlivened with enough to whet the appetite for such a history.

Hamlyn insists that a history of philosophy should also be *philosophy* and not simply a branch of history. This might mean that the whole book itself is the working out of some idea – for example, presenting the history of the subject in some Hegelian fashion as spirit gradually becoming aware of itself. Or it might sustain and develop an argument about the nature of abstract thinking, saying for example that abstract thought is sustained as a possibility for us by feeding primarily on its own past products, rather than by responding to perplexities that are generated perennially out of current life and experience.

The present volume, however, is less ambitious. Though Hamlyn has written extensively on epistemology and metaphysics, here his philosophy is confined to summarizing the main arguments of about three hundred writers, from the pre-Socratics to Michel Foucault. Whole chapters are devoted to the work of Aristotle, Plato and Kant, and there are extended discussions of perhaps a couple of dozen others – Socrates, Augustine, Descartes, Hegel, Nietzsche, Russell and so on. The summaries are often critical. We are told that Socrates' argument in the *Phaedo* establishes only that the soul cannot die, not that it is everlasting; and we are invited to reject Kant's claim that the tables of traditional logic can provide a key to the categories of experience (roughly: "if there are four of those, there must be four of these"). But there is no attempt at any very much broader perspective on the work of these thinkers – just summary judgments, like the assertion that Locke's contrast between simple and complex ideas "has been

disastrous for epistemology", and that G. E. Moore's reputation is unlikely in the long run to persist.

It may be thought anachronistic of Hamlyn to evaluate from his present perspective the arguments of philosophers other than his contemporaries. But I think this charge would be unfair. The fact is that there is in our history a sense of certain enduring problems – like the nature of death, the passage of time, perception and reality, and the basis of purpose – which unite the thinkers in our philosophical tradition. Ever since it became established in



Charles Nicholas Cochlin's "A Gentleman writing at a Desk by Candlelight" was sold at Christie's for £1,400 on April 1.

our culture that the way to do philosophy was to address, criticize and build on the arguments of one's predecessors in a reasonably detailed way (and that was established by the twelfth century at the very latest, with the recovery of Aristotle's works in the West), philosophers have written with an eye to the past and with a sense that the best they can wish for their work is to be commented upon in the future. To that extent, the business of evaluation is self-validating, even across the centuries. Certainly, Hamlyn's evaluations, though brief, are always sensitive, as far as one can be, to differences in problematic, precision and circumstance. One gets the impression that he is as much at home with a detail in Aquinas's view of the essence of God as he is with the later Wittgenstein, and as mystified by Heidegger's doctrine of the reality of nothingness as he is by the Pythagorean

suggestion that justice is like the number four. As one expects from Hamlyn, the book is mostly well crafted and readable; it is neither laden with footnotes (there are twenty in the whole book) nor weighed down with technical language. Its centre of gravity is primarily metaphysics and epistemology, and morals and politics are given rather brusque and peripheral treatment. But this choice of emphasis is perfectly understandable. There are plenty of books on the history of ethics and political thought; and anyway, if ethics aspires to the status of moral philosophy as opposed to mere moralizing, it must address questions of ontology (What sort of thing is the goodness of a good life?) and epistemology (Is objective moral knowledge possible?). The only pity is that in almost every case, Hamlyn has chosen to append a separate summary of the views of those of his philosophers who wrote on these matters, rather than to show how their work on morals and politics was integrated with their more central philosophical concerns.

The highlight of the book is undoubtedly the chapter on modern rationalism: Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz, and their accounts of substance and attribute, mind and body, doubt and reason. The material is obscure and the issues are distant; but Hamlyn succeeds admirably in expounding the interest and complexity of the issues involved. By contrast, the chapter on the British empiricists – Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Reid – is disappointing and unevenly written. None of the excitement of Hume's philosophy is conveyed: the account of causation is surprisingly muted, and the treatment of the "miracles" chapter in the *Enquiry* is a travesty. It is quite misleading to say that in the latter discussion, "Hume reveals a faith in the laws of nature which might seem surprising, at any rate to a relatively casual reader of the treatment of causality in the *Treatise*". It is exactly the treatment of causality in the *Treatise*, in terms of constant conjunction and the associative mechanisms that it triggers, which gives rise to and validates Hume's assertion that anyone who finds himself able to believe in the occurrence of an event which is outside the ordinary course of nature must be "conscious of a continued miracle in his own person which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience". But every philosopher who reads the book will have some such quibble. I do not think that detracts from its worth as a general guide to three millennia of philosophizing in the West.

cannot infer that something exists from its having an attribute, for example thinking? Certainly the version of the *cogito* which Cottingham treats as the authentic one seems to rely on the principle.

If what has attributes need not exist, then existence may be what Kant denied it to be – a predicate; and so his classical objection to the ontological argument for the existence of God fails. Cottingham consequently deploys post-classical, and rather unconvincing, objections to Descartes's straightforward version of the argument. It rather seems that Cottingham's Descartes has bought the ontological argument at the price of the *cogito*.

This book gives us a glimpse of what Descartes's scientific theories were really like, analogies surprisingly unsupported by mathematical theory; and an interesting account of his view of secondary qualities, the "qualia" which make up the world as we perceive it. Descartes and Richard Dawkins (in *The Blind Watchmaker*) seem startlingly close together, if we replace God by Evolution, the blind watchmaker. But Dawkins would be unimpressed by Cottingham's claim that "it is not clear that this evolutionary approach can explain all the distinctive qualitative aspects of our sensations". One doubts whether Cottingham is any more expert in the theory of evolution than some bishop.

"Logish" is a language used by teachers of elementary formal logic; it is a half-way house between the English of our premises and conclusions and the symbolic formulae we use to demonstrate that the premises really do entail those conclusions. English helps us to get from the sentence to the appropriate formula, and

vice versa; and it seems to have no other virtue, possessing the clarity neither of English sentence nor symbolic formula. Peter J. Markie's book is written mostly in English that is clear and gritty, but the business part, so to speak, of the book is couched in Logish. Here is a specimen: "D6b: x is a substance – df (1) x has a real attribute, and (2) there is no y such that y has a real attribute, y is numerically distinct from x, y exists contingently, but it is logically impossible that x exists and y does not."

In this language Markie sets out to "capture" – a favourite word – Descartes's Gambit. This is Descartes's attempt to discover his own nature from what he knows and what he does not know; rather as M15 might build up a picture of a spy merely from knowledge of facts known and not known by him. Bit by bit, patiently and carefully, Markie distils into chains of Logish sentences this central argument. Markie is a learned and scholarly man; but I am not sure he is quite reliable as an interpreter. One illustration must suffice. Descartes: "Substance cannot be discovered merely from the fact that it is a thing that exists, for that fact alone is not observed by us." Markie's version: "We never observe that a particular thing exists without observing other facts about it." The embellishments seem to be there purely to reconcile the passage with Markie's own interpretation of the *cogito*. However, Markie's book has a rigour and coherence which will appeal to his more stalwart reader. Descartes's *Gambit* is beautifully produced.

The best bits of both these books are the quotations from Descartes, which have a clarity and vigour one grows to appreciate in more books about him one reads.

Harmonies of the humane

Andrew Saint

EDGAR KAUFMANN, JR.
Fallingwater: A Frank Lloyd Wright country house
190pp. Architectural Press. £37.50.
0851398391
JONATHAN LIPMAN
Frank Lloyd Wright and the Johnson Wax Buildings
192pp. Architectural Press. £27.50.
0851390333

Fallingwater and the Johnson Wax Buildings are the incomparable masterpieces of Frank Lloyd Wright's maturity. Kenneth Frampton's introduction to the Johnson Wax book goes further, claiming the Administration Building there as "not only the greatest piece of twentieth-century architecture realized in the United States to date but also, possibly, the most profound work of art that America has ever produced". To put it more calmly: here is architecture which merits the best of all possible monographs. Happily, that is what these two books amount to. Not many people get to Bear Run, Pennsylvania, or Racine, Wisconsin, the settings for their subjects. This makes their value the greater.

Fallingwater is cast more in the guise of the coffee-table book. The detailed history of this spectacular house, set deep in a forest and caused impudently out over the torrent of the Bear Run falls, was well set out some years back by Donald Hoffmann's *Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater* (1978). It could only be supplemented by something more sumptuous, more atmospheric and more personal, something which could at once serve as the costlier kind of memento for visitors and at the same time make the distant Wright enthusiast feel that he had explored and experienced the house in all its aspects and context. Great effort has therefore gone into the photographs and their reproduction. They show this most photogenic of buildings from below, above, within, without and underneath, from the minutest detail to the broadest expanse of wood and water around it, and in all sorts and conditions of snow, sun, flood, and, best of all, autumnal tint. The result approaches as near to perfection as could be desired in the use and reproduction of colour in architectural photography.

Accompanying the pictures is a delicate text by the former owner of Fallingwater and well-known American writer on architecture, Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. Kaufmann's powerful father, a Pittsburgh store-owner of the same name, was the client for the house. But in many respects it was the son, drawn young to Wright by the lush individualism of the architect's autobiography, who caused Fallingwater to be built. In 1963, eight years after his father's death, Kaufmann handed the house over to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, which must be in conjunction with a nature studies centre. His essay assumes in part an almost valedictory tone. A brisk preface by Mark Girouard provides needed stimulus, reminding us that Fallingwater epitomizes two centuries of architectural searching for ways of living in harmony with nature.

Jonathan Lipman's *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Johnson Wax Buildings* is a different style of book. Wright's Administration Building for S.C. Johnson and Son at Racine dates from the same years as Fallingwater (1937–9) and reveals the architect in a similar mood of bloodily-minded perfectionism. But in its looks, structure and functions it is a much more complicated affair, while its setting in suburban Racine is utterly prosaic. The average visitor is reduced to perplexed gaping at the astonishing, hermetic, double-height workroom, with its floor-to-ceiling stalk-and-calyx columns. It all needs explication. This Lipman supplies in exemplary manner. As with Fallingwater, the documentation, literary and photographic, is abundant, so he is able in the main to let the Johnson Wax tale tell itself.

Herbert ("Hib") Johnson, enlightened third-generation owner of an enlightened firm committed to profit-sharing and reduced hours of labour, is the hero of the story as much as Wright. The Administration Building, was erected out of the money from "Gib-Coat",

self-polishing substance which lifted Johnson Wax out of the rut of the Depression. The profits must have been good, as both the Administration Building and the Research Tower which followed after the war suffered hideous cost overruns, which Johnson paid with only subdued grumbling. He also commissioned from Wright a vast house, Wingspread, now used by the Johnson Foundation. The main reason for the cost was that Wright made no bones about experimentation. At Johnson Wax the stalk-and-calyx columns, the roof, the lighting and much else were all new, in terms of engineering and servicing as well as of appearance. The structural innovations worked out remarkably well, but not everything did. Wright wanted a closed environment to shut out the suburban muddle all around and create, as he explicitly said, a kind of church of work. So he put the openings high up and used semi-opaque Pyrex tubes to glaze them. They leaked. As much of Lipman's space is taken up with technical points of this sort, his book will appeal more to architects than to the general reader. But his text is never dull or disagreeable and the photographs, especially those showing the testing of one of the stalk-and-calyx columns, are enthralling.

What can be learnt about Frank Lloyd Wright in the 1930s from these books? First, he was impossible to work with, yet practically impossible, once engaged, to beat or sack. Kaufmann senior and Johnson, tough-minded men, both had brushes with him and came off worst. "He insulted me about everything, and I insulted him, but he did a better job", recalled Johnson. One side-effect was that Wright never sorted out relations with his contractors. Fallingwater had a poor builder whose mistakes are still being rectified, while the Administration Building at Johnson Wax was a "financial and constructional nightmare".

Blasting out of the studio

Robert Edward Murray

WYNDHAM LEWIS
The Caliph's Design
Edited by Paul Edwards
183pp. Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press. £18.95 (paperback, £8.95).
0876856652

Throughout his career as a writer and painter, Wyndham Lewis was aware of the need to act as a publicist for his own work and aesthetic theories. This was most evident in the two issues of the Vorticist magazine *Blast* – particularly the "puce-coloured monster" of June 1914 and its monolithically devised iconography. After the movement had been dissipated by the First World War, Lewis the ex-bombardier and ex-officially commissioned war artist tried to restore the revolutionary spirit he had previously engendered with "Group X" – a loose amalgam of five of the old Vorticist group and four other artists, including the American painter and poster designer E. McKnight Kauffer. However, as was clear from the recent *British Art in the Twentieth Century* exhibition at the Royal Academy, the achievements of Group X were not as pervasive as those of the original Vorticists. The lack of a commonly held group aesthetic perhaps pre-empted Lewis's efforts to produce an equivalent of *Blast* for his erstwhile allies (although in 1921 he single-handedly began *The Tyro* and in 1927, *The Enemy*), but even so he still maintained the literary flank of his artistic campaign, in the form of a pamphlet published in October 1919 – *The Caliph's Design*.

The pamphlet was no mere revolutionary bagatelle. Lewis was to place much value on this particular component of his critical oeuvre, republishing it in an only slightly revised form in *Wyndham Lewis the Artist* (1939); the later version also appeared in *Wyndham Lewis On Art*, edited by Walter Michel and C. J. Fox in 1969). The new Black Sparrow edition reprints the 1919 original, but with an explanation of the historical context in which it was initially written, as well as copious notes on the later revisions, by Paul Edwards. The subtitle, "Architect's Where is Your Vortex?" echoes the old Vorticist iconoclasm, but in fact in the

Second, the buildings described represent the release of pent-up ideas and energies. Most architects build little till they are forty; their creativity soon gets worn out in the slog of practice thereafter. Wright was abnormally busy between the ages of twenty and forty, up until 1910. Then because of personal problems followed by economic recession, he was underemployed for twenty-five years. Fallingwater and the Johnson Wax Buildings embody structural and other ideas which he had been maturing for a decade and which he was to carry over, perhaps less successfully, into his later works.

Finally, the books show that one of the reasons why Wright was a great architect was that he was a great engineer. In this sense he was as much the disciple of his old master Dankmar Adler, architect-engineer of the Chicago Auditorium, as of the more mercurial and better-known Louis Sullivan. Fallingwater and the Johnson Wax Buildings are both exceptional structural feats, imaginatively yet safely conceived because of Wright's intuitive capacity for engineering, matured over years of practice and observation of things natural and artificial. He stretched these talents to the very limits in these buildings, using points of support and cantilevers for the express purpose of destroying the hated "box". In this way he hoped, as Edgar Kaufmann phrases his intentions in relation to Fallingwater, to create an architecture which would help make "human life more natural and nature more humane". Others, in particular his unsung assistant Wesley Peters, did the calculations, but Wright practically never made an engineering mistake. This confidence was critical to the breathtaking feats of design involved in these two great and humane twentieth-century buildings, now, through these books, made more accessible for everyone.

pamphlet Lewis was addressing himself to the needs of the post-war world and to a new spirit to reform, rather than the old one of revolution. This reflects the development of his own painting from an extremely abstract style to a more figurative one, as seen here in the accompanying illustrations.

The Caliph's Design is based on the premise that existing modern architecture is so poor in its functional design that drastic measures are needed to improve it. The Caliph in question is an absolute ruler (of Baghdad) with the power to order the appearance of his city to be changed, threatening to behead his engineer and architect, Mahmud and Hassan respectively, if they fail to come up with plans to create a Vorticist city by the following morning. Lewis devised this elaborate analogy as an irreverent view of his own attempts to pursue, through Vorticism, the abstract artist's ideal: to reshape the world which provides the raw material for his art. Then, moving away from his fictional introduction, he goes on to state that the faults in the immediately perceivable world of architecture are so great that they could never be eliminated by a few well-intentioned artists alone. What is needed is a universal endeavour to realize

the great line, the creative line; the line, the exultant mass; the gale that snaps and cracks like a well-brooded instrument string; the sweep of great tragedy; the immense, the simple satisfaction of the completest art.

Of course, Lewis intended this focus on architecture to underline his critical view of all artistic activity at the time, reserving his customary polemical bite for the artists of the Bloomsbury Group and the Paris School of Synthetic Cubism, and berating them for what he saw as an increasing isolation from the world outside the studio.

Even so, Lewis's exhortation to his fellow artists – "You must get Painting, Sculpture, and Design out of the studio and into life somehow or other" – sounds suspiciously like a lament for his frustrated efforts to create an art that was both abstract and utilitarian in purpose; we may also be reminded of the tragic loss of the Italian Futurist architect, Antonio Sant'Elia, in the First World War. It seems that many good ideas were doomed to stay on the drawing board, as they were on the easel.



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Partingtime Hall

A Film Script by JOHN FULLER and JAMES FENTON

I

He stepped off the platform and into eternity,
Only sixteen and a future so bright,
The heir to a fortune so large he could burn it, he
Could have bought Ferdinand Marcos outright.

The Press was ablaze with the curse of the Schruijkers:
DAD DROWNS IN LAKE, NOW SON FALLS UNDER TRAIN!
They shot at the mother with motorized Leicas,
They blew up her face and they blew up her pain.

She came for the funeral, veiled and in sables.
The scent was so strong that it made your heart race.
A whiff of musk-rose with a hint of the stables,
A dash of what beavers bite off in the chase.

The Head took her arm up the aisle and he murmured:
"We thought you'd like lunch at the Partingtime Arms.
I've given you over to Mr McDiarmid.
He coached Paul last year when he flunked on the Psalms."

"The da-ay Thou ga-avest Lo-ord is ended . . ."
The standard of singing was all you could wish.
The Chaplain's encomium really was splendid,
He almost implied that young Paul was a dish.

The Captain of Hockey, the Captain of Rugger
And four perfect prefects bore Paul to his grave.
"Sod this job", said the Head Pre. "This coffin's a bugger.
Do you think she might tip us? I feel like a rave."

They threw in his colours. She tossed in some roses.
Then Mr McDiarmid appeared at her side.
He gave her a squeeze as they both dabbed their noses,
Then steered her away through the press like a bride.

They made their escape in McDiarmid's two-seater,
Which he took down the lanes just as fast as he dared.
The short-cut was neat, the haircut was neater.
His trousers and nostrils were equally flared.

The Partingtime Arms is a sen of chintz sofas,
Oak-cradles with pot-plants and grandfather clocks.
There's an annexe with Ploughmen's for ploughmen and chauffeurs
While Mum's brought the menu with rum-on-the-rocks.

The chef learned his trade from a plausible maitre
Who taught him the rules of the latest cuisine,
Fundamentally stingy, more *nécessaire* than *être*:
A raspberry gravy with half a French bean.

McDiarmid had tact. As he toyed with his coulis,
He watched her recover in fits and in starts:
He knew her emotions had been put through a mouli.
Her cheeks were like goat's cheese or chicory tarts.

He started to comfort her after the widgeon
(Half a breast each, in a sauna of pears)
With a dash of philosophy, crumbs of religion
And a freckled left hand with a fuzz of red hairs.

The endive was curly, with sesame dressing,
The redcurrant sorbet was willing and damp,
The water boiled up as their knees started pressing
And fell back as coffee when he blew out the lamp.

II

"Oh Mr McDiarmid? So kind at the funeral . . ."
(Her lips at the mouth-piece) . . . what would I have done . . .
And yet I believe it was fated that sooner or later
We'd meet . . . all you did for my son.

"So much we must talk about" (crooned the receiver)
"I feel that there's something unique that we share
I've sent you your ticket. We'll meet at Geneva.
You know Paul was all for inviting you there."

The head saw the point of the kind invitation:
McDiarmid had not been himself since the death.
"Besides, there is only a week to vacation.
I can manage to hem all the kilts for *Macbeth*."

III

He felt fairly swell as he proffered his passport
And strolled through the gate to the Baggage Reclaim
But the clasp of his case hadn't done what a clasp ought
And the burst-open contents revolved to his shame:

It wasn't the nightgown or volume of Virgil
But the special effects he had smuggled along:
A knowing young nun gave him back his Defergel
(Though he had to disown the carise wet-look thing).

Lolly Schruijker looked striking in white at the barrier.
Her chauffeur looked insolent, tailored in blue,
As if to say, Do you expect me to carry a
Suitcase like *that* for a chancer like you?

The car was a Yulva and snug as a thumb.
The trim could have cost almost any amount:
Kid arm-rests, smoked glass and cologne on a gimbal,
As private and lush as a numbered account.

As they drove to the Château, his hostess was chattering,
Her nails on his blazer. Alert as a lynx!
He was shown to his room. Its dimensions were shattering.
He showered and gargled, then swanned down to drinks.

"I'd hoped we'd eat out." "Really? that would be splendid!"
"But Anton is certain a storm will soon break.
You can't see the French side: the mist has descended.
So tiresome. You just can't rely on this lake."

At the end of the meal Anton laid out the Pfluml.
"What's this?" "Brandy." "Hmmm." "But it's made out of plums.
You don't *have* to . . ." "I'd love to . . ." The butler went gloomily.
McDiarmid's eyes watered. "Hot stuff!" he said. "Crumbs!"

Stuffed elks, shields and antlers, dim trophies with handles,
Lost legends and mottoes, the husband's bequest,
Reflections in glass, stalactites from the candles,
One eyeball, two eyeballs, a hostess, a guest.

"Oh Mr McDiarmid . . . Well, Mr McDiarmid!
No, Mr McDiarmid! Ow! Mr McDiarmid—"
He looks faintly troubled. His trousers confirm it,
Projecting a map of Australia in sperm.

IV

Next morning, he gingerly stepped on the jetty.
The mountains hung over his hungover brain
And their peaks in reflection made passion seem petty
And the previous night's pounce absolutely insane.

He loosened the painter and pushed out the dinghy.
The breakfasting waves took a slurp at the prow.
He had a slight problem: *one* oar in each thingy—
And he knew he'd to pull, and go backward, but *how*?

She was feeding the swans from the end of the terrace
With a bagful of yesterday's croissants and rolls,
While Anton laid breakfast: hot chocolate and cherries,
Bresola and Gruyère and profiteroles.

He noticed the swans moving in, a flotilla.
Their radar homed in on each depth-charge of bread.
Every bird was a threat, every beak was a killer.
She perfected her range and a crust hit his head.

"Good morning!" "Oh, there you are . . ." "Wasn't it frightful?"
"Wasn't what?" "Oh, the *storm*!" "I suppose so . . ." "Don't say
You didn't hear?" "Oh, I was out like a light, full
Of . . . what was it called?" "Pfluml." "God! . . ." "That's OK."

I was actually flattered. Such things don't occur, you
Must realize, out here. Yes, you know what I mean!
Stop brooding! It's OK! You weren't *going*, were you?
I've given your trousers to Anton to clean."

V

You mix, thought McDiarmid, as he tied up the painter,
Though her mood had now changed like the mood of the lake.
She was quiet and thoughtful. Her smile had grown fainter.
It seemed she had some proposition to make.

"There's a thing—oh, it's ghastly—I can't bear the thought of it.
I just don't know where to begin with Paul's room.
I haven't been in there. I know that I ought to, it
Seems such a business. It fills me with gloom."

McDiarmid's eyes narrowed. "You mean, Paul's possessions?
They're just as he left them? Poor Lolly. I see.
It's hard on your own to throw off these obsessions.
No, no, I insist! You must leave it to me!"

She gave him a glance that was girlish and grateful.
She offered to help him, but he said: "No way."
He'd done this before. It was hard. It was hateful.
But it had to be done at the end of the day.

He crumpled his napkin and rose from the table.
He was firm as a journalist hot on a scoop.
He asked his directions from Anton, unable
To credit his luck in this chance of a scoop.

VI

Where would Paul have kept them? He hoped they were hidden.
They had to be found, or they'd say what they knew.
The room was a graveyard, a sort of a midden,
As clear as a dig in an aerial view.

The geometry set with the missing dividers,
The flexible rule from his O-level phase,
Approval and hinges and balsam-wood gliders,
The sticky remains of a brief Airfix craze.

The barlequin slumped in its tangle of cotton,
Muck-trayed dirty fringe, a dreadfully head,
The books he'd grown out of as babies and forgotten,
The books he'd grown into right there by the bed:

Selected John Ashbery, Schuyler, O'Hara,
Gravity's Rainbow, and *End as A Man*,
Young Törless, Cavaly and others bizzarrer,
Lord Weary, *Das Schloss*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*—

"And all with my bookplate!" (Mountgracechurch McDiarmid—
The boys called him "Mounty"; the staff called him "Grace"—
Three pelicans passant, a thing like a mermaid.
A motto whose Latin fell flat on its face).

"Did I lend him all these? Did he read them?" he muttered,
"It's rather a challenging list to get through."
He picked up the Wilde. From its pages there fluttered
Two opera-stubs for *The Turn of the Screw*.

He remembered the evening, the Miller production,
The rush up to London, the crush at the bar,
The face at the window, the ghosts of seduction,
The cold cherry soup in the old Gay Hussar.

It was then that it happened, without his volition.
It was then that he knew things had got out of hand,
From a brief awkward pause to a deep intuition,
A dangerous game, unforeseen and unplanned.

The boy was returning to be with his mother
(His father had drowned early on in the term)
And one kind of comforting leads to another
As any experienced arm will confirm.

Paul left the next morning, and thanked him so sweetly.
His letters began to arrive every day.
McDiarmid replied, and replied indiscreetly.
He was proud of his prose and got carried away.

It was fun for a while, but a week or two after,
As the trunks were unloaded at Partingtime Halt
And the smoking compartments exploded with laughter
And the nude in the toilet was nobody's fault

And the plunge baths were filled with a rumble of plumbing
And the steam in the changing-room wept down the wall
To the wall of Toshiba's and barely-tuned strumming,
There were tears in the study at Partingtime Hall.

McDiarmid had cooled. All he saw was the danger.
He had to draw back or he might lose his post.
Paul had needed a friend. What he met was a stranger.
Merely Mounty again, when he'd needed him most.

There is loss in a look, there is sorrow in seeking.
There's a drop on the page and its savour is salt.
There's a phone in the staff-room, the constable speaking:
"There's a boy on the tracks down at Partingtime Halt!"

VII

He shuddered a little and tore up the tickets.
"*The Turn of the Screw*", he remarked. "That was apt.
Now where are those letters? I'd better be quick, it's
The one opportunity, or I'll be strapped."

He started to look in the obvious places.
The desk drawers were jammed with old essays and books.
A knock at the door. It was Anton, with cases:
"Madame sent you these." He gave one of his looks.

Left alone once again, he scoured section by section
As seekers of treasure lay grids on a field.
From corners to centre he scoured to perfection,
But those risqué epistles remained unrevealed.

And the cases filled up and the room was denuded
And phimples of bluetack were left on the wall.
If the letters weren't there, then (McDiarmid concluded),
The boy must have thrown them away after all.

He walked up and down: could the parquet be lifted?
He felt in the marquetry desk for a drawer.
He pushed the tiled stove, but it couldn't be shifted.
Then he knew he was watched: she was there, at the door.

"It's as if you had killed him." "What? Lolly, how could you?"
"I mean, all that life—you've just packed it away."
"You did ask me." "I'm sorry. Be kind to me, would you?"
"I can't tell you how much I've been dreading this day."

She came to his arms like a child to a towel,
All shivering and blue and in need of a hug.
He laid on the charm, laid it on with a towel,
And her eyelids grew heavy as if from a drug.

She wouldn't let him go, he wouldn't let her go.
They fell on the bearskin and their skins entwined.
He took her obliquely, he took her *a tergo*,
He took her in every niche he could find.

And in every room, every time they were able,
From terrace to turret, from attic to vault,
From bearskin to bed to the billiard table,
They mocked at the phantom of Partingtime Halt.

VIII

The spell had been long. It was time now to break it.
McDiarmid had protised the skulls every day.
He invited her out for a trip on the lake,
Was time now to say all the things he must say.

"It was wonderful, Lolly. I mean it. No, really.
I'll treasure the memory as long as I live.
You exist so intensely. You pay for it dearly,
And still at the end you have so much to give."

"At the end?" She looked blank. "Mounty, don't be so silly.
You're not going back to that awful old place."
"I have to." "Why? Brr . . . Now I'm feeling quite chilly."
"Let's go home", she exclaimed, with a dainty grimace.

It was time to be tough. "Lolly, listen, my dearest—"
"DON'T PATRONIZE ME!" It was just as he thought:
She would go off the deep end at even the merest
Suggestion he wouldn't behave as he ought.

"Lolly—" "STOP IT!" "My job, Lolly!" How she was shrieking
And weeping and stopping her ears with her palms.
The water was choppy, the rowlocks were creaking.
McDiarmid leaned forward, took hold of her arms,

And said: "Listen." She shook herself free: "No, *you* listen,
You vulgar young man, don't you push me too far."
The rage through her tears made her irises glisten.
"I know what your type is. I know what you are."

"And what might that be?" Now McDiarmid was nettled.
Her laughter was sudden. It came and it went.
"You must have forgotten. You've got some unsettled
Affairs, you remember? Those letters you sent?"

I've got them, of course. Did you think I might lose them?
My lawyer's instructed. The moment you've gone,
A phone call from me and he'll know how to use them.
I'm afraid you're the prisoner. This is Chilloua."

McDiarmid laughed. "Lolly, you are so preposterous.
When I tell the world what you did with young Paul,
Do you think they'll admire you? My dear, you'll be ostracized.
Think of the scandal . . . What's that, then—one-*all*?"

He gloated. She coloured. "I never!" "Now, Lolly,
It's all there in writing. The child was upset.
He told all the details. So touching!—but folly.
If you do things like that you deserve what you get."

She screamed as she stood up: "No! What are you saying?"
He reached out to grapple her down—a mistake.
They fought for a moment, unbalanced and swaying,
Then the dinghy capsized and they fell in the lake.

She wouldn't let him go, he couldn't let her go.
She clung for dear life but she clung like a shroud
And they sank through the world where the mourners and myrrh go,
Through the waves, through the wharfs, through the wailing crowd

Of the drowned, of the drifting, the drugged and the driven,
While fingers extended and bubbles for breath,
Unmourned, unrepentant, unloved, unforgiven,
A total immersion course ending in death.

The siren went up. The hydraulic doors lifted.
The lifeboat was triggered and shot from the chute.
It skimmed down the lake where the dinghy had drifted
And circled the scene of their fatal dispute.

From a terrace a mile off a telescope glinted.
On the eye at the eyepiece, as cold as blue steel,
The film of the lake was developed and printed.
Anton picked up the house-phone and cancelled the meal.

IX

The last summer tourists are quitting the canton.
The Sotheby's agent is making a list,
Sticking numbers on Braques. There's a number on Anton.
There's a gap in the inventory. Something's been missed.

And at Partingtime Hall there's a queue for the bursary
Where incomes from covenants turn into sweets.
The boys don't suspect, being fresh from the nursery,
How allowances bolster the school's balance-sheets.

The chauffeurs are waiting, the mothers are weeping,
The gravel is deep on the drive to the gate.
No tears before bed-time, no tousie-haired sleeping
Or shout up the banisters: "Johnny, it's late!"

Instead, over villa and mews-flat and rectory,
A mysterious warning is heard to appal:
"You cannot escape from Fate's tragic trajectory,
Put down in the cradle for Partingtime Hall."

For grief's a seducer with fur on his collar
And love is a child who steps into a car.
At Partingtime Hall it's a dime to a dollar
A love and a grief will find out who they are.

For love comes to grief like a gull to an oillick,
And where is the solvent to salvage its wings?
Where the kiss for the frog? Where the dog who Job's boils lick?
And where are the tweezers to pluck out the stings?

He stepped off the platform and out of the triangle.
Look what a trail he has left in his wake—
Grief to compare with the grief of the Dying Gaul,
One corpse on the ralla and two more by the lake.

So come all you parents and pity these spectres,
Give heed to the heart-stopping story of Paul:
Don't buy that yearbook. Tear up that prospectus.
Don't send your children to Partingtime Hall.

John Fuller and James Fenton

Behind the lines

Lorna Sage

"It is never a good time to start a new journal", writes Terence Hawkes in the editorial of volume 1, no 1, of *Textual Practice*, but Spring 1987 is very possibly the worst and most inauspicious moment for those who can plot the signs: "Connoisseurs of the Unripe Time could be forgiven for regarding the present year as a vintage one" — by now (sentence number five) the tone is almost jaunty. The impression of gallant and groundless optimism is backed up by the publishers, Methuen, who moved the shining hour by re-launching two other journals at the same party (on Friday, March 13): *Cultural Studies* (a cosmopolitan reincarnation of the *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies*) and *New Formations*, heir to the Routledge Formations series which, according to the Methuen editor Jane Armstrong, was always aspiring to the conditions of a journal, even though it "trickled out as books". Despite — or because of — their disparate roots (*Textual Practice*, though "new", is by way of being house journal to Methuen's New Accents series), the journals have a good deal in common besides their launch on what James Donald, the editor of *New Formations*, calls "a bad new day". Come to think of it, the editorials have something in common too: all three belong less to the theory of culture than to the culture of theory, within which the vagrant "text" has come to cover not only the electronic media but (Terence Hawkes again) "philosophy, law, history". As Linda Hutcheon from McMaster, for once succinctly slung, puts it in her "Beginning: Theorise Postmodernism" in *Textual Practice*, they are products of the moment of the "Post" — "a four letter word if ever there was one".

However, though the journals review some of the same books, and particularly those of one another's contributors (it's hard to decide whether this is due to mutual consolidation, or instant deconstruction), there are differences. *Textual Practice* carries more traces of its literary-critical origins, if only in the euphoria that

betrays refugees from the gulag of books, and is designed as a forum for Anglo-American dialogue, whereas the other two belong rather to the Media Studies world. *New Formations* is closest to giving up on academe (as James Donald wryly observed, "that route has closed down behind us") and trusting to the elusive media audience employed neither in universities nor polys, whom Ms Armstrong describes darkly as "ICA goers all wearing black and looking identical". These are the new readers of the "margins" ("kids who watch soap opera know about narrative as well"), interdisciplinary adepts at the application of one set of rules in another place. Some of them, almost certainly, will be arts entrepreneurs: both *Cultural Studies* and *Textual Practice* have pieces on the Greater London Council's shortlived experiment with arts policy, indications of their not-so-secret ambition to seize power in the "regime of the production of truth", and translate "Post-into 'Pre-'. James Donald spells it out, although (being still "Post" enough to doubt) he hides behind a quotation from Gramsci — "the possibility and necessity of creating a new culture". (All three journals will be published three times annually, *New Formations* and *Cultural Studies* at £35 to institutions, £18 to individuals, *Textual Practice* at £35 and £22, from Methuen, 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE.)

Postmodernity is a splendidly capacious category, and almost certainly should accommodate the current "literary" activities of the artist John Bratby who, after his brief angry young man period in the later 1950s (unlike Andy Warhol he really was extremely famous for not much more than fifteen minutes), gradually invented for himself a new role as a liberal-humanist subversive, "painting Individuality". Sitters (chosen and approached by Bratby himself) have included the Queen Mother, Sir Alec Guinness, Paul McCartney and Sir Michael Edwards, but he has an especially soft spot for writers since, whatever they claim, they respond to the notion that they're

among the last members of an endangered species with touching credulity. And as they sit, they talk about their work. William Trevor told Bratby that his stories wrote themselves; Paul Theroux claimed to have invented a whole alienated science-fiction plot (for *O-Zone*) while trying not to admit to being a real person; and Edna O'Brien confessed to vertigo, having "sat" too near the edge of her chair. However, they all conspire with Bratby to perpetuate their uniqueness, and quite often end up living with the results, whether they are heroic Laurens Van Der Post, or anti-heroic history man Malcolm Bradbury. John Bratby himself thinks that this counter-counter-cultural initiative in the world of books probably had its dim origins in a self-portrait he painted back in angrier days. The writer Neil Dunn bought it, hung it on her wall in Cheyne Walk, and promptly mistook it for a burglar.

"Harrods in Fiction" was the planned title of an anthology which, alas, may never see the light of day. It seemed such a good idea, said Alison Campbell from *Harrods Magazine*, but then it turned out that all the magic narrative moments that people claimed to have on the tips of their memories boiled down to the heroine having a nervous breakdown in the Food Hall in Penelope Mortimer's *The Pumpkin Eater*. Michael Arlen's *The Green Hat* affords a less traumatic glimpse, there's something in *A Perfect Spy*, and a son-in-law of the house produced a faction called *The Store*. Eric Newby's *A Traveller's Life* has a whole chapter called "travels in Harrods" — but isn't fiction, so doesn't count. It sounds, in fact, as though, short of a course in *Cultural Studies* (see above), which might demonstrate that in this Post-modern, late capitalist world any sentence that mentions Harrods is a fiction, the project will languish. Unless, of course, charitable and well-read TLS readers come to the rescue with impeccably invented items, which will need to reach The Editor, *Harrods Magazine*, Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7XL by the end of April. No prizes.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 324

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than May 1. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct — in which case inspired guesses will also be taken into consideration. Entries, marked "Author: Competition No 324" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on May 8.

1 The Skirrid (I like to repeat the name) wore, it is true, at a distance, the aspect of a magnified extinguisher; but when, after a bright, breezy walk through lane and meadow, we had scrambled over the last of the thickly flowering hedges which lay around its shoulders like loosened strings of coral and begun to ascend the grassy cone (very much in the attitude of Nebuchadnezzar), it proved as smooth-faced as a garden mound.

2 And on the bare and high
Places of England, the Wiltshire Downs and the
Long Mynd
Let the balls of my feet bounce on the turf, my face
burn in the wind,
My eyelashes stinging in the wind, and the sheep like
grey stones
Humble my human pretensions.

3 To wait until next year's bloom at the end of the garden

INFORMATION, PLEASE

Frank Lloyd Wright: personal recollections, letters, memorabilia, photographs; for a commissioned biography.
Meryle Secrest.
10121 Burton Glen Drive, Rockville, Maryland 20850, USA.

Walter Benjamin (1892-1940): whereabouts of letters; for the collected edition or *Gesammelte Briefe*; to be published by Suhrkamp Verlag, Rolf Tiedemann.
Benjamin-Edition, Friedberger Anlage 24, D-600 Frankfurt a.M. 1, German Federal Republic.

Foams to the Malvern Hills, like an inland sea,
And to know that its fruit, dropping in autumn
stillness,
May have outlived me.

Competition No 320

Winner: Angus Easson
Answers:
1 "But, sir, is it not somewhat singular that you should happen to have *Cocker's Arithmetick* about you on your journey? What made you buy such a book at Inverness?" He gave me a very sufficient answer. "Why, sir, if you are to have but one book with you upon a journey, let it be a book of science. When you have read through a book of entertainment, you know it, and it can do no more for you; but a book of science is inexhaustible."
J. Boswell, *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*

2 About this time I took much delight in Wordsworth's and Coleridge's poetry, and can boast that I read the *Excursion* twice through. Formerly Milton's *Paradise Lost* had been my chief favourite, and in my excursions during the Voyage of the Beagle, when I could take only a single small volume, I always chose Milton.

Charles Darwin, *Autobiography*.
3 I can't read Jeffries on the Wiltshire Downs, Nor browse on limericks in a smoking-room; Who would try Trollope in cathedral towns, Or Marie Stopes inside his mother's womb? Perhaps you feel the same beyond the tomb. Do the celestial highroads only care For works on Clydeside, Fascists, or Mayfair? W. H. Auden, "Letter to Lord Byron", part 1.

Joseph Conrad: any information about the whereabouts of the manuscript of "Some Reflections" on the Loss of the *Titanic* (sold Sotheby's, 1963); gallery proofs of the *English Review* setting of "Some Aspects of the Admirable Inquiry into the Loss of the *Titanic*" (sold Sotheby's, 1963); proofs of *Notes on Life and Letters* (sold J. A. Allen, London, 1924); for a critical edition.
J. H. Staps,
3638 West 2nd Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6R 1J7, Canada.

Children's Book Fair

Lindsay Duguid

Historically, trends in children's publishing are a good indicator of social developments. However, this year's Bologna Children's Book Fair (April 2-5), which was host to 1,160 publishers from fifty-six countries, gave an unexpected insight into the state of our society. It is not difficult to see the anxieties about education which underlie the large number of series books on "Crack and Cocaine", the read, nor the social concern which prompts the AIDS. But what can be deduced from the mind that the trade unions and the inflation of the 1970s ended the era of Arnold and Huxley?

He complains that the Government has no plan other than hacks and cuts. I think this is partly just; but I wonder if Reed would have welcomed the firm direction I would like to have seen. This has been lacking because governments respect university autonomy. For twenty years government tried to make the system more economical by hints and nudges. In 1981-82 push came to shove; but the Government still tried to get universities to take the hard decisions themselves. I think the obstacles, including tenure, are too great for reconstruction without direction. But it looks as if direction is coming. The White Paper proposes that the University Grants Committee in its new form will enter into a contract with each university on its funding and development.

Reed does not address himself to a single point made by George Walden (Letters, March 27). Let me put one of them again to him. Would he agree that Oxford should pay some professors more than others in order to induce them not to drain to America? Every other university (except Cambridge) operates professional spread. Or does Reed stand by egalitarian principles? Odd if he does, in view of his sneer at egalitarian sermons and at glowing tales of polytechnic-led expansion, "as if this had been designed". Of course it was designed. One of the scandals in the 1970s was the way polytechnics filled their empty places with overseas students. Or is Reed opposed to the helots being educated?

Why, again, does he allege that the "increasingly desperate hackings and joinings" in the University of London were unplanned? When a Labour government was in power the University was forced to make a scheme to rationalize the medical schools and, soon after, the non-medical schools. Nor was I left in any doubt by the then Chairman that the UGC was not prepared any longer to fund small multi-faculty colleges for teaching and research that would be done more cheaply outside London.

How well I recognize Reed's tone of righteous indignation — the bland assumption that nothing should change except very gradually and only when judgments of value should be "founded on evidence and argument"; evidence which, when it came to the crunch, was always dismissed as inadequate or unobtainable. That tone of voice met so many attempts at government made to rationalize resources after 1967. Reed says no one he knows has ever met any "clandestine penitents" who, Walden declares, accept that the Government's aims are reasonable. No doubt he moves only in the best circles. But I know numbers of dons, as well as vice-chancellors and deans, who recognize that resources must be rationalized; and that far more courses should be geared more to the needs of business and industry. Mr Reed, I believe, is a *Germanist*. How many departments does he think should be teaching *Germanistik* in all its rigour, and how many should be providing courses to teach students to speak and write the language, combined with other courses in computing and the modern German economy and politics?

A sympathizer with Richard Janko (Letters, April 3) and lament that old-style classics departments have been (over the past twenty years) contracting. But does he think that, whatever the demand, the number of posts should be kept constant to enable him to be placed? (I am an ignoramus and don't recognize the name he plucked on the Government; but didn't Tacitus write *ubi solitudinem faciunt, desertum appellant*?) Unfortunately, the system has got to change owing to its costs, and such

Book Bonanza, the Inner London Education Authority's children's book fair, will take place from Saturday May 2 to Sunday May 10. The fair will be held in a marquee on the riverbank terrace of the Royal Festival Hall and includes a daily programme of workshops, storytelling sessions, expert advisors and visits from authors and illustrators. Books on display from a number of publishers will be for sale. Further information is available from Rosamund Stone of Color Leitham, (01-633 2143).

Letters

Government and Education

Sir, — T. J. Reed (Letters, April 3) reminds me strangely of Dr Pusey. A century and a half ago that worthy divine and other Oxford dons could not envisage a university which would be open to men and women of any creed learning subjects like economics and science and be a centre of research. Mr Reed cannot envisage universities which are not funded on the principles extant in 1960. Last year I argued (TLS, April 11) that no country in the world, not even America, could afford to finance all its institutions of higher education on the principles of 1960. Has it not crossed Reed's mind that the trade unions and the inflation of the 1970s ended the era of Arnold and Huxley?

He complains that the Government has no plan other than hacks and cuts. I think this is partly just; but I wonder if Reed would have welcomed the firm direction I would like to have seen. This has been lacking because governments respect university autonomy. For twenty years government tried to make the system more economical by hints and nudges. In 1981-82 push came to shove; but the Government still tried to get universities to take the hard decisions themselves. I think the obstacles, including tenure, are too great for reconstruction without direction. But it looks as if direction is coming. The White Paper proposes that the University Grants Committee in its new form will enter into a contract with each university on its funding and development.

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change is painful, as the Army found in the 1960s. But it was a relief to hear that some eminent academics had urged that major government-funded research should be concentrated in a relatively small number of universities. It is unthinkable that Oxford should not be one of them; but I do hope that Mr Reed will be one of those prepared to re-think its methods of admission, teaching and finance.

NOEL ANNAN.

16 St John's Wood Road, London NW8.

Sir, — Was there any good reason for Richard Janko (in his admirable letter in your issue of April 3) to alter *Tacitus' solitudinem* to *desertum* and his *appellanti* to *vocant*? Perhaps, in view of the kind of pre-electoral economic triumphalism now so much in evidence, a more appropriate rephrasing of the original (*Agicola, xxx*) might be *Ubi solitudinem faciunt, prosperitatem appellant*.

SIMON COLLIER.

Department of History, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex.

Sir, — One of the most striking features of the present government is the unabashed way in which it claims credit for every slice of good luck that comes its way; George Walden's self-congratulatory letter (March 27) is squarely in the mode of Mr Lawson's Budget — the Chancellor ascribes the effects of low commodity prices and devaluation against our competitors to the prudence and good sense of himself and Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr Walden boasts of an increase in students in non-university higher education which occurred more because the Government was powerless to prevent it than for any more noble reason.

The rest of his letter is equally of a piece with the present government's style — hectoring and bullying, and continuously unfair to its opponents. It is not merely in private that most academics are ready to admit that they would rather work in efficient universities than inefficient ones, that they would like to experiment with whatever means are possible to increase the age-participation ratio, and especially to increase access for the less well-off. Nor do they think that universities are already perfectly managed and staffed by uniformly excellent teachers and researchers. If academics were all such natural conservatives, they would never have gone along with Robbins twenty-five years ago.

What has made the profession defensive is the wholesale mismanagement practised by Walden's department. Since 1979, there has been absolutely no attempt to engage in a dialogue about the need to restructure higher education, and no serious attempt to consider what sort of administrative machinery would be required to make it happen. Instead, there have been financial cuts accompanied by exhortations to practise an efficient management which the DES has itself made impossible by constantly going back on promises of "level funding" and a return to something like triennial or quinquennial grants. It is a sign of the contempt in which Walden evidently holds university teachers that he mentions none of this.

As for sustaining the pace of reform, the reality of that is that the most energetic and conscientious members of my own faculty have spent most of this academic year working out how to shed something like one job in six with the least possible damage. The idea that we can afford to hand out professorships to the deserving when we cannot afford to pay for all our everyday teaching is simply a bad joke. And after ten years of messing about, few of us believe the Government will allow us subsequently to get on with our real work — teaching and research, rather than book-keeping. This is not the frame of mind in which inventiveness flourishes, whether it is inventiveness in creating new courses or inventiveness in research.

I do not think of myself as "feeling" to America, nor do I feel that I deserve wider opportunities or higher pay. But George Walden is quite right; those of us who are pushing off do feel that reform will be a terrible long time coming — judging by his letter, it won't be in his time at the DES.

ALAN RYAN.

New College, Oxford.

The Renier Collection

Sir, — While it is obvious that a substantial marketing exercise has to be undertaken to raise the half-million pounds needed to purchase the Opie Collection of Children's Literature for the Bodleian Library, it is less clear why current publicity avoids mention of the Renier Collection.

This major collection of children's books and related materials was presented by Anne and Fernand Renier to the Victoria and Albert Museum in the early 1970s and is currently being transferred to temporary accommodation prior to final assimilation into the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. Despite limited space the collection has already attracted many researchers, and when it is finally housed at the Museum it will probably be the largest of its kind on the country.

Brian Alderson (April 3) is right in drawing attention to the treasures and scope of the Opie Collection, but his comparison with the holdings of the British Library seems somewhat obtuse. He should know that one of the greatest strengths of the Renier Collection lies in its large number of variant copies and that a more profitable comparison might have been made with these. Although superlatives such as "earliest" and "rarest" mean more to the layman than to the scholar, they should still be used with some degree of caution. A recent piece of publicity issued by the Friends of the Bodleian Opie Appeal claimed that a copy of *Infant Institutes*, published in 1797, was the only known example. In fact, a telephone call would soon have established that this item is also held in the Renier Collection. It would be sad if those campaigning on behalf of the Opie Collection felt it necessary to overlook the importance of the Renier Collection in order to attract more funds.

Both collections are of immense value and are in themselves remarkable tributes to the imagination and foresight of their creators. It is to be hoped that the Opie Collection finds its way to the Bodleian Library where it will complement and be complemented by the V and A's Renier Collection.

BARRY ANTHONY.

6 Brambles Close, Isleworth, Middlesex.

Terence's Plays

Sir, — In his letter of March 20, 1987, my good friend Peter Brown asserts that (in my review of March 6) I perpetuated a misconception in claiming that "only one of Terence's plays found favour with Roman audiences". As proof to the contrary he adduces Suetonius. May I respectfully point out, however, that he is alluding not to anything in the *Lives of the Caesars*, but rather to the fragmentary *De viris illustribus* whose *Vita Terentii* is preserved in Donatus' (fourth-century) commentary on the playwright.

It is generally accepted that this biography has been altered by later hands and, in any case, is a farrago of quotations from several other lesser-known "authorities" such as Fenestella, Santra and Nepos (himself quoting "a reliable source"). Indeed, the actual statement to which Brown refers to support the claim that Terence's comedies were greeted *aequaliter* by the Romans, is information Suetonius seems to have derived from Vulcacius Sedigitus, a late second century ac scholar whose words are preserved only here and in Aulus Gellius.

If Brown finds Suetonius' sources so reliable, then he must also accept the testimony of one Quintus Cosonius, upon whose authority Suetonius relates that Terence's ship returning from Greece sank, sending the poet and a hundred and eight plays he had adapted from Menander to the bottom of the sea.

With due respect to Suetonius, Vulcacius and Cosonius — not to mention Peter Brown — I would maintain that the *ipsissima verba* of the prologues are ample evidence of Terence's unpopularity.

ERICH SEGAL.
Wolfson College, Oxford.

The bibliography of Fascicule III D-E of R. E. Latham's and D. R. Howlett's *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* is available separately, price £5 (not £10 as stated in the TLS review, January 23) from the British Academy.

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SUSAN ESTRICH

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COMMENTARY

Superficial conversation

Julian Graffy

ANTON CHEKHOV
Three Sisters
Greenwich Theatre

Elijah Moshinsky's production of *Three Sisters* begins remarkably. He has staged the first act as an ambulatory, mutually uncomprehending polyphony. As one of the main characters stands at the front of the stage speaking with intensity about love, memory, Moscow, the rest of the cast continue their irrelevant and superficial conversations, laughing, joking, moving about. This device, sustained throughout the act, often with almost all the players on stage, underlines and externalizes a central Chekhovian concern: for his people are alone and incapable of mutual support in their fragility. This is a neurotic, self-conscious production, but the neurosis and hysteria seem to emerge not so much from inside as from out, from the constant motion, actions and business. Against this background the self-hypnosis of talk about the Moscow past or the distant, radiant future is strikingly obvious—these people are mechanically repeating learnt lines, lulling themselves in an unbearable provincial present.

In later acts this highly orchestrated production becomes increasingly inadequate. Either there are fewer actors on stage, or they are sitting down—movement will no longer work. The dramatization of Chekhov's intentions from outside becomes more superficial, modern, even crude. There is a growing raucousness, too many speeches are shouted at full volume. The production displays a crucial misunderstanding about the character of the Prozorovs, who for all their myopia are educated and restrained people who will continue to behave in *extremis*. Consistent with Moshinsky's approach is the recurrent use of obtrusive music and sound effects, as if he lacked confidence in the power of the words alone. The nadir of this jarring incomprehension comes in Act Four, when the parting Vershinin casts Masha violently to the ground: Chekhov as Italian opera?

Abnormal artefacts

T. J. Binyon

Blue Velvet
Various cinemas

Blue Velvet has a promising opening sequence: a white fence, red roses; a man in sun-glasses watering the lawn; his wife watching television inside. The man keels over with a heart attack, the camera zooms in on the grass, and descends through the earth into a dark nest pululating with loathsome creepy-crawlies. It is a symbol, the first of a veritable forest, most of which stick out so obviously that anyone in the front row of the cinema risks losing an eye: beneath the peaceful, ordered life of smalltown America lurks something extremely nasty—as the college boy Geoffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) soon discovers when he picks up a severed human ear in the woods. Intrigued, he begins an amateur investigation, helped by Sandy Williams (Laura Dern), a pretty blonde high-school senior. "I don't know if you're a detective or a pervert", she muses, a doubt that occurs to us when we see him hiding in a closet to watch Frank Booth (Dennis Hopper) beat up his mistress, the chanteuse Dorothy Vellens (Isabella Rossellini), whose husband and young son he is holding captive. Frank runs the drug racket in Lumberton; he's a sadistic, scopophobic psychopath with an Oedipus complex, who peps himself up with maskfuls of gas (nitrous oxide?), sensuously fondles (and occasionally gags his victims with) pieces of blue velvet, and goes wild over Roy Orbison's "In Dreams"—an odd concatenation of neuroses, undoubtedly worth a footnote in anyone's textbook of abnormal psychology.

As well as enjoying a tender teenage romance with Sandy, Geoffrey is soon making it with Dorothy. "Hit me, hit me", she moans. He complies, reluctantly. Then Frank finds

In a production so dependent on directorial vision, there is no acting performance of outstanding insight, nothing to warrant a re-reading of the play in that character's likeness. Peter Sallis is appropriately exasperating to the sisters as Chebutykin. Cathryn Harrison makes a sinister, predatory Natasha. Katherine Schlesinger captures Irina's combination of exaltation and isolation well, though even she tends to shout her major speech in Act Three. Another fine young actress, Joanne Whalley, whose voice alone initially seems to equip her for a remarkable reading of Masha, gives a disappointing and anachronistic performance. In all her unhappiness, Chekhov's Masha remains ironically intelligent—this is what the other characters admire in her, what makes her a focal point of the play. Miss Whalley has been encouraged to play without sufficient weight and gravity. Her interpretation is at its worst in Act Three, where her contorted embraces with the pillow with which, according to Chekhov's stage direction, she "comes in and sits on a sofa", go ill with her earlier assertion (in Michael Frayn's translation) that "I'm upset by vulgarity. It offends me."

Frayn's version is supple and effective. It amply persuades us that he is right in suggesting that all the hopes, all the pious phrases expressed by Vershinin at the beginning and by Olga at the end are only that. For despite the vagaries of the production, we can still appreciate Chekhov's extraordinary disillusioned intelligence, his unique insight into the perfidy of soothing words.

Michael Frayn's translation of *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov has recently appeared (67pp. Methuen. Paperback, £3.95. 0 413 52450 7). *The Cherry Orchard* (£3.95. 0 413 39340 2) and *Wild Honey* (£2.95. 0 413 55160 1) are already available from Methuen and *Uncle Vanya* will appear later in the year. *File on Chekhov*, compiled by Nick Worrall, a recent title in Methuen's "Writer-Files" series, contains brief summaries of nineteen plays with stage histories and contemporary comment, and a bibliography of primary and secondary sources (96pp. Paperback, £3.50. 0 413 53740 4).

him coming out of Dorothy's apartment and, infuriated by this, and even more by the fact that Geoffrey prefers Heineken to Pabst Blue Label, beats him up to the strains of Rob Orbison. It is at about this time that one realizes there isn't any logic, sense or point to plot, action or character; that, although the camera lingers lovingly on artefacts, there is nothing real about Lumberton: the whole thing's symbolic, like a plaster Thanksgiving turkey. Interest fades, even though we've still got a nude, battered Dorothy turning up on Geoffrey's stoop, several bodies, a good deal of gore, and a final resolution which re-establishes order and harmony and provides—in a last symbolic gesture—a thrush to eat the nasty beetles of the

The fruits of ambition

Alan Jenkins

Half Moon Street
Curzon, Mayfair

The first thing you think, as the credits roll on this adaptation of Paul Theroux's novella *Doctor Slaughter* (1984), is why would anyone want to ditch that title in favour of something so anodyne, so socially insinuating? Then you wonder why the film-makers were attracted to anything as bleak and economical as Theroux's book, since what they were clearly after in fact was a blandly entertaining tale of true love winning out against international terrorism.

They have retained the central relationship, between cold, corrupt, clever—but not "smart"—Lauren Slaughter, Harvard PhD turned expensive call-girl, and kindly, elderly working-class peer Lord Bulbeck, a roving Middle-Eastern expert; retained, too, the setting of a London lately become the playground of

In a dry season

Paul Preston

FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA
Yerma
Cottesloe

Between 1932 and 1936, Federico García Lorca completed the trilogy made up of *Bodas de Sange*, *Yerma* and *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*. In their portrayal of repressed sexuality exploding into fatal violence, they may be seen as a premonition of the civil war to come. The three plays throb with the conflict between (respectively) illicit love, the maternal imperative and generalized sexual desire, on the one hand, and the stultifying hypocrisy of a world in which feudalism, if not legally and politically, then certainly socially and sexually, still ruled supreme.

Yerma is the most ambiguous of the three and its final violent resolution is therefore the most difficult to bring off in performance. The ambiguity derives from the heroine's entirely metaphorical name. The word *yerma* usually applied to land, means barren, as in *tierra yerma*, be it for lack of proper farming, of fertilization or of water. Yerma is not necessarily barren. Juan, her husband, may be sterile or impotent or simply not cherish her enough. She could fulfil her desire for a child if she would transgress her sense of honour. Her own taboos, reinforced by terror of village gossip, prevent her testing her fertility with another man. They do not, however, prevent her resolving her frustration by murdering her husband. The demands that the play puts on any actress are daunting in the extreme.

In the unenlightened Spain of the 1920s and 1930s, the homosexual Lorca knew the pain caused by sexual feudalism. He is unequalled in expressing the private anguish of the inarticulate. This is something which Juliet Stevenson as Yerma, and to a lesser extent, Roger Lloyd Pack as Juan, bring off triumphantly. Yerma's journey from newly married eagerness, through bewilderment at continuing childlessness, to a poisonous sense of waste and bitterness, stimulates Juliet

opening sequence.

David Lynch, the film's writer and director, also made *Eraserhead*, *The Elephant Man* and *Dune*. It is odd, therefore, that here he hasn't managed to extract a single *frisson* from perversion, a single shudder from horror, or a single thrill from action, while the nearest the film comes to deep thought is in Geoffrey's words, endlessly repeated, each time after deep deliberation: "It's a strange world, Sandy"; a message which could have been put over with far more finesse and subtlety by writing it in neon letters half a mile high along the Grand Canyon. With all this going for it, *Blue Velvet* is bound to become a cult movie, and probably a cult fabric as well.

sheikhs and car-bombers, escort-agencies and casinos, growing fat on Arab money, the talk of petrodollars, development aid, research funding and arms deals. In Theroux's book all this is vividly, obliquely, sketched in; in the film it could be the décor for a chic, empty farrago à la James Bond. Almost all the venomous ironies of the book—it is a work of great anger and disgust—have been sacrificed, along with many of the more frightening touches, to an overall tone of would-be knowing nastiness; some of the crisp dialogue has survived, but much has been updated or "filled out" with unnecessary detail. What is hinted or given with non-committal terseness in the book has become full-blown action in the film.

The greatest loss, though, is in psychological and moral acuity. Doctor Slaughter's obsession with health and physical purity (living on yogurt and apples, she springs and lopes and exercises in a cesspit of her own choosing), her being "encouraged" by the stupidity and selfishness in a man's voice, her extreme contempt

Stevenson to a performance of great moral integrity. However, the stress on emptiness and dignity rather than on repressed passion renders the final act of violence something of a *non sequitur*. Roger Lloyd Pack's gamut and tormented Juan comes over more as a North London intellectual than an Andalusian peasant. If that means that dryness and sensuousness come easily, his expression of inner pain all the more affecting. The oppression of conventional morality is cleverly conveyed by Juan's slug-like sisters who glide silently across the stage, in sinister invigilation of Yerma every move.

The destructive power of a prying society is brilliantly suggested in Di Trevis's production by the simple device of placing the audience on four sides around a central stone playing area. Whether lit as the sun-baked town square or the dark cell-like interior of Yerma's house, it remains equally claustrophobic. This works especially well in the central scene played out by the chorus of washerwomen who sing and beat their washing to a pulsating elemental rhythm. They are comic and bawdy, raucous and obscene, but their gossip is also hypocritical and malicious. These are clearly the same women who can be heard in *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* dragging a fallen woman through the streets.

The erotic vitality of the washerwomen, contrasting with Yerma's private tragedy, falls horrendously flat when transferred to the other public scene. Picking up on a hint from Lorca's official biographer, Ian Gibson, Di Trevis plays as bacchanalia the final scene where a desperate Yerma attends a fertility rite. The real pilgrimage on which Lorca based the scene, to Moclin near Granada, more often than not turned into an orgy. Unfortunately what is meant to be a symbolic riot of freedom and vigour ends up as a clodhopping drunken shindig, with music that owes more to Hosi Wangford than to Falla or Lorca.

As always with Lorca in translation, the language is a minefield. His plays pulse with melody and the pain of the Andalusian folk songs which he collected, and none more so than *Yerma*. Curiously for the work of a friend and colleague of Dalí and Buñuel, Lorca's poetry manages to be both simple and realistic, in part because the Andalusian dialect is a naturally poetic one. Translations into English can opt for the poetry or the peasant realism. Peter Luke has gone for the latter and has produced an eminently speakable version which is vigorous and colloquial. Its talk of "Hiss" and "gobs" is far from the *Andalusian lullaby*, but it retains with great immediacy Lorca's counterpoint of water images and metaphors of dryness. Played at the Cottesloe in vaguely Yorkshire accents to give a regional feel, it inadvertently gives off more of Northern English puritanism than repressed Andalusian passion.

The present production comes as near as we are likely to get to a successful version in English. That is both the best and the worst that can be said of it.

for the sexual helplessness of her clients, her hard, crass, all-colouring ambition, even the weapon of her sensuality, are attenuated or all but imperceptible in Sigourney Weaver's highly watchable, rather charming performance. Correspondingly, the book's British sensibility which drives her into the arms of the sinister fixer van Arkady becomes, here, the more folksy, Bohemian make-do-and-mend of Notting Hill. Theroux's Slaughter gets a horrible come-uppance, and revelation comes through the general turpitude like a burn; here, she saves Bulbeck (also rounded out, in all seasons, as a vehicle for the ubiquitously wrong-footed Michael Caine) and the world, but not before she has been put through a dozen variations of the lovely-girl-in-dire-peril theme. It is a conception at variance with the skillful, spare creation of a novelist whose painted characters ate's eye (London once seemed a different place) and Jamesian fixation on the ways of being foreign in England gave us such a rich diary, shocking moral tale.

Wars without reasons

Christopher Wintle

AULIS SALLINEN
The King Goes Forth to France
Royal Opera House

Satire that has nothing particular to bite on may well seem a toothless wonder. Such is the risk run by Aulis Sallinen's partially satirical third opera, *The King Goes Forth to France* (1984), an adaptation of a radio play by the composer's Finnish compatriot, Paavo Haavikko. Subtitled "A chronicle of the coming of the new Ice Age", it is introduced in this production by an ironical compère, the fourteenth-century scribe Froissart, who announces rather portentously: "Historical progress is slow indeed. Sometimes it takes a full century to go back fifty years." As modern society advances, Haavikko seems to be saying, so does it also regress; our prehistory's glacial condition has returned; we are forced to abandon our country and the civilization we have made for ourselves. Yet as we move south into warmer climates (France), we ignore their redeeming potential and inflict upon our

Money matters

Nicholas Kenyon

GEORG KAISER
From Morning to Midnight
Soho Poly
GEORG KAISER and KURT WEILL
Silverlake
Bloomsbury Theatre

The root of all evil is still going strong as a motivating force in human behaviour. But it seems peculiarly difficult for us to recapture the intensity of moral loathing towards the dangers of materialism that informs Georg Kaiser's dramas. Sue Dunderdale's production of *From Morning to Midnight* is brilliantly conceived and realized, however, and Abbey Opera's Camden Festival account of *Silverlake* is saved by the music of Kurt Weill.

In the cramped basement of the Soho Poly, a tiny cast gives some coherence to Kaiser's creaky structure (a "Stations of the Cross" procession of tableaux and unrelated incidents which he presumably drew from the model of Strindberg's *To Damascus*) by mixing the parts, mixing sexes, so that the ever-changing characters around the central bank clerk are always eerily familiar. Especially effective is David Bamber's wildly neurotic performance as the clerk who, aroused by the scent and feel of an Italian woman customer at the bank,

adopted landscape a brutality that emulates, if not surpasses, that of our ancestors who fought in the Hundred Years War. Since much of this chronicle is presented paradoxically (and this lively production makes the most, and possibly more than the most, of its opportunities), it is inevitable that an audience will search for the real butt of its humour. The causes that have yielded these effects are hard to locate; and in their absence, the actual significance of, for example, "Parliament", the gigantic cannon that dominates the stage for more than half the opera, and which discharges itself at the audience during a revue-style staging of the Battle of Crécy, remains obscure. The work, which is not very much about England, or France, or even, one suspects, contemporary Finland, exists in something of a topical vacuum.

The composer's task in setting this libretto is made especially difficult by Haavikko's uncompromisingly bleak and Nordic view of war and the human condition ("the nature of man is cruelty, pure and simple"). Sallinen, who has won something of a reputation as a symphonist, is not an ungifted composer, and has a certain instinct for the theatre; yet the need to mediate between at least two genres places a great strain upon the resources of his musical

steals 60,000 marks and rushes off to her in the forlorn hope of providing everything she needs. The events of the single day take him to a snow field where he encounters a premonition of death; back home, where he rejects the comfort and stability of his family; to a race-course, where he sponsors races but is interested only in the pandemonium of the crowd as they crush each other lunging for his scattered money; to a "chambre séparée" where he humiliates or is humiliated by his partners; and finally to a Salvation Army Hall where, confronted by sinners who confess to his own sins, he is captured and electrocuted as he tries to escape. "A short circuit in the system", is the closing line: such artificial disruption of the social order can never work, the play seems to say.

It suits the brittle, simplistic dialogue, and schematic structure of the play, that the level of stylization in both speech and acting is very high: angular movements, frozen expressions, with the passion bursting out only in the anguish of the bank clerk. In John Eaton's fine production of *Silverlake* the approach is more naturalistic, less formal, and this makes Kaiser's text even harder to accept at its full length. Characters become conventionally severe or conventionally camp, and the emotions even more simplistic. Almost twenty years separate *Silverlake*—the last, climactic production of the Weimar years, it opened a fortnight after Hil-

language. The satire is projected in a familiar way through characteristic spiky rhythms, ostinati and percussion (xylophone, woodblocks, and so forth). The deeper preoccupations find their correlates in a pervasive use of telegraphic motifs, and in ubiquitous interlocked common chords that create tension without ever really establishing a powerful identity for themselves. These harmonies relate especially to the young king, who stands at the centre of the action as one of modern opera's more brazen anti-heroes. Indeed, if we were not assured by the work's concluding words that he represents no more than the spirit of the times (ours), he would seem to be an egregiously callow upstart with formidable psycho-sexual problems: he wages "the only war in history that has ever started without a single reason", ignores the claims of the four women in his retinue to marry a German princess whom he promptly pawns, and flays one of his archers who dares to express an interest in going to Paris, before cutting his ears off.

Most puzzling, though, is the women's music, which lies between these extremes. It is tempting to suggest that here the Romantic string writing and banal whole-tone sequences parody the contrasts they are intended to pro-

ject. Yet the significance of women in the work as a whole is too enigmatic to allow so forthright a judgment. Indeed, one senses that the composer has never really overcome the problems inherent in adapting a play, something that also manifests itself in the regularity of the pacing, and the almost uniform manner of composing with a single, broadly shaped, vocally led line.

All of this notwithstanding, it is nice to report that for once the vitality of the production (by Nicholas Hytner) helps, rather than hindering the work, especially in the local, satiric invention—a boisterous dance for King and Prime Minister, an obsequiously flamboyant royal birthday party, a dumb show in semaphore by a nurse during the battle. The singing, too, is consistently committed. The Danish Mikael Melbye reinforces the impression made earlier in the season with Papageno of a confident and engaging stage presence, while Sarah Walker and Eilene Hannan, the foremost of four ladies, turn to advantage some of the work's most expansive music. That the opera is sung in an English translation by Stephen Oliver and Erkki Armi offers a welcome alternative to surtitles. Okko Kamu, a Sallinen specialist, conducts.

ler became Chancellor—from the First World War period of *From Morning to Midnight*, and during that time Kaiser himself was imprisoned for bankruptcy (his defence being that as an artist he could scarcely be expected to abide by normal rules of civil conduct). *Silverlake* is more directly moralizing than *From Morning to Midnight*. When the police officer Olim wins the lottery, his conscience (prompted by the very effective chorus), makes him devote all his energies to nursing back to health the vagrant Severin whom he has shot and wounded. In the artificial cocoon of a richly-endowed castle, guarded by the looming presence of Frau von Luber (a hilarious but somewhat rudimentary portrayal by Meriel Dickinson), the two have to come to terms with each other. Salvation comes only by giving up all riches, accepting each other, and setting off to a new vision of the future across the silver lake of the title. This utopian ending—made all the more stark in the Abbey Opera staging by being set against the future extermination of the concentration camps—is a remarkable upswing in the very last moment of expressionist drama. But it is Weill's music which makes the notion believable. The insistence of the ostinato under Severin's aria; the acid parodies of popular numbers of which the shopgirls' duet is the best; the fiery, vicious song of "Caesar's Death", which suddenly issues forth from the gentle harp of Fennimore

—all these are more effective for bursting through acres of spoken dialogue.

And even if the choral writing may seem less strongly characterized, more prone to wateriness (despite the extremely strong projection of the whole score by Abbey Opera under Antony Shelley), it manages to carry the vague vision of a better future embodied in Kaiser's finale with total conviction. There are a couple of effective melodramas, spoken over music, and the Overture is a masterpiece of tension-raising. While Kaiser's text remains stuck in its time, Weill's music has lost none of its power.



"Fred Kaplan takes a radically new and interesting approach to Victorian sentimentality. By setting this often observed phenomenon within the intellectual context of eighteenth-century moral philosophy, he has effected an important shift in the way the subject is customarily treated. This is a work of robust and untimely intelligence."

—Michael Goldberg,
University of British Columbia

Sacred Tears

Sentimentality in Victorian Literature

Fred Kaplan

Sacred tears, as Thackeray called them, flowed frequently in Victorian novels, and Victorian readers cried easily, too. Dickens often wept while he brought his audience to tears with his popular public readings of scenes from his books. What can these tears mean to the "non-sentimental" modern reader? Fred Kaplan's speculative essay skillfully leads us from eighteenth-century ideas about human nature—with some comments on Puritan views—to the assumptions, the working values, of Victorian writers, especially the "sentimental" Dickens and Thackeray, as well as the great Victorian opponent of sentimentality, Carlyle. Professor Kaplan's tour through a number of familiar eighteenth- and nineteenth-century works yields a new understanding of what sacred tears meant to the Victorian public—and what they may sometimes mean in the twentieth century. Victorian sentimentalists were attempting valiantly to resist those elements of their culture that were rapidly encroaching on any possibility of a moral ideal. To them tears were the visible sign of rediscovering or returning to our first nature, our best human nature, our moral sentiments.

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Johanna

Consumer games

Simon Green

JOHN HARGREAVES
Sport, Power and Culture: A social and historical analysis of popular sport in Britain 258pp. Oxford: Polity Press. £25.
0745601537

NEIL MACFARLANE with MICHAEL HERD
Sport and Politics: A world divided 271pp. Collins. £12.95.
0002182394

ALLEN GUTTMAN
Sports Spectators 236pp. New York: Columbia University Press. \$24.95.
0231064004

Both for those who play and those who watch, sport is fun. It is simply more exciting and exhilarating than everyday life. Books about sport once reflected this happy state, rehearsing tales of individual and collective glory. They did not advance theses about the human condition under the capitalist mode of production. But no longer: sport has become a subject for academic attention and a last bastion of sentimental diversion has fallen victim to the scholarly study and the specialist journal.

John Hargreaves's *Sport, Power and Culture* and Allen Guttman's *Sports Spectators* are products of this new solemnity. There are no heroes, and precious little excitement, to be found in these pages. It is depressing to read, in the introduction to *Sport, Power and Culture* by that old puffer of a commentator, Stuart Hall, that "John Hargreaves's study has the considerable merit of treating sport as a social phenomenon and setting it squarely in the context of power and culture where, in my view, it properly belongs." Perhaps this less than novel insight does represent an advance. Sport is a major industry in all advanced societies: it is also employed as a weapon of state policy in the Eastern bloc and in much of the so-called Third World. But a little modesty might also be in order. Sport is marginal to national economic performance, its significance in world politics is scarcely more central.

The thesis of *Sport, Power and Culture* is simple. Sport is inextricably linked to the power relations of capitalism. Since the mid-nineteenth century, a reconstructed system of bourgeois sporting organization, founded in the Victorian public schools, has slowly and imperfectly established a political hegemony over popular and working-class culture, integrating the lower-middle and upper-working classes into its cultural norms while simultaneously alienating and oppressing the lower-working class, females and, more recently, ethnic minorities by isolating them from socially sanctified forms of sporting activity. This cultural division has crucially weakened the working class in its heroic struggle for liberation. Today the hegemony of the bourgeoisie is continually reproduced through the ideological media of consumer and television sport, and in the cultural pretensions of the physical education profession. Finally, by direct intervention, the state finances sport to re-establish a non-existent community, while simultaneously exploiting popular fears about the violence attendant upon plebeian sports to impose stricter legal control over the oppressed classes.

Short of its accompanying verbiage, this argument is unconvincing. It is also implausibly presented. Hargreaves claims that the division and subordination of the working class are reproduced in sport, but portrays a conspiracy without a subject. No agent, he assures the reader, deliberately engineers this state of affairs and no ideologues are offered for examination or vilification. The argument is constructed strictly for the benefit of the *illuminated*, Gramsci's theory of hegemony is barely elucidated and never philosophically justified; so, too, Foucault's conceptions of power. Their universal validity is simply assumed. Armed with these conceptual pludgions, Hargreaves is able to insist upon the most intimate theoretical relationship of every cultural form to every other cultural form with all too predictable results. No proposition he forwards is testable. No conclusion is quantified. For example: "Sports, together with other cultural forms, centring on body needs and desires, fashion, cosmetics, dieting, cooking etc. are

now firmly articulated on consumer culture, in a two-way determined/determining relation". No one denies that there is a connection between sport and consumer culture, but no causal relationship is established merely by citing a banal truism. No correlation can be identified without an indication of variance. The statement as it stands is meaningless.

It is also typical of the book. When, on occasion, something approaching a causal argument is attempted, the result is invariably a deceptive half-truth. In an argument pursued with a clarity that recalls the best of Dave Spart, Hargreaves insists that the "New Right Government" in Britain increased the control of the state over voluntary sports bodies, first by sacking the Chairman of the Sports Council — "the first to go in this way" — and then by attempting to enforce a boycott of the Moscow Olympics. But the Chairman in question, the former Rugby Union International, Dickie Jeeps, was hardly a bastion of the left. His fall was, in part, precipitated by his support for the resumption of sporting links with South Africa, and partly by his failing to turn up to an official meeting. If there was a right-wing conspiracy underlying that dismissal, it was very well concealed. The boycott of the Moscow Olympics was successfully resisted by British sports federations. The government's attempt to coerce them against their will failed ignominiously. It seems odd to conclude from these two examples that, "Clearly the Sports Council has less autonomy and has become more integrated into the apparatus of the state".

It is a line of reasoning that will certainly

Mainline exertions

Gavin Ewart

VERNON SCANNELL (Editor)
Sporting Literature: An anthology 354pp. Oxford University Press. £12.50.
0192122509

Dr Johnson's well-known definition of a lexicographer as "a harmless drudge" could, surely, be equally well applied to the anthologist (a word he doesn't recognize). The amount of reading required is terrific, the reputation small. Vernon Scannell has done well, and has my sympathy. He addresses himself to hunting, shooting, fishing, boxing, football, cricket, golf, bowls, tennis, swimming, running, mountaineering. These are, of course, the mainline, traditional sports. There is no hockey, motor-racing, skiing; but, as Scannell says, not much of merit has been written about them. He also says that "reluctantly" (I don't believe him) he has confined himself to British writers "with the small exceptions of three brief translations, one from Latin and two from the Greek Anthology, and the splendid poem by the American, Elizabeth Bishop, 'The Fish'". It seems odd to make this one exception, though it is certainly a very high-class poem. It is easy to see that you don't want to open the flood-gates and let in Fenimore Cooper and Hemingway, not to mention Ring Lardner and the baseball writers, and a whole literature that is unfamiliar to you and that you don't understand. One would bet a knuckleball to a Chinaman that this was self-preservation on Scannell's part.

Even with this wise limitation, there is a huge amount of material. (The only serious omission seems to be a glossary. What are "musli", "Lags", "Meuse"?). Probably, 350 pages of sport is about as much as the general reader can stand. The specialists — the middle-aged, the flannelled fools, the mountain-climbers — will find something for sustained reading; but for most people this is going to be a bedside book, to be dipped into. And there is a remarkable amount of good writing, with a few hidden treasures for the first time brought to light: Rupert Brooke's "The Pleasures of Rugby", for example, written when he was seventeen.

When first I played I hardly died.
The bitter memory still ripples.
They formed a scrum with me inside.
Some kicked the ball and some my ankles.
I did not like the game at all.
Yet, after all the harm they'd done me

surprise Neil Macfarlane, Minister of Sport from 1981 to 1985. *Sport and Politics: A world divided* is essentially a potted narrative of his time in office. Occasionally it bears the scars of its origins. Few will find a detailed account of political intrigues and administrative procrastination between the Sports Council and the Central Council for Physical Recreation riveting reading. But his principal arguments are modestly presented and his concern for the health of British sport is clearly apparent.

Less evident is a junior minister's capacity to effect any significant change in the politics of international sport. Hypocrisy and greed govern all in this sphere. The use of sport as a tool of international morality is merely grotesque. Many Third World régimes which display a contempt for their own populations similar to that of the South African government, nevertheless exploit the "Glennegles Declaration", not only as a convenient prop to display their own political self-righteousness, but also to flex political muscle. The main victims are their own sportsmen and women, and no one cares very much about them. Ironically, the best defence that sport commands against political interference is its own wealth. Commercially sponsored televised sport is a multinational business which may degrade the Corinthian values, but it is also powerfully entrenched. Athletes suffer at the hands of capricious politicians largely because, for the moment, they are formally amateur and represent their respective nations. Tennis stars represent nothing but their own contracts. No Minister for Sport can control them.

Whenever I came near the ball
They knocked me down and stood upon me.

This is one of the very few negative approaches. These consist, apart from complaints of an ecological kind about the bad effects on other wildlife of selective pheasant-rearing, of four only: Evelyn Waugh's famous set-piece on the school sports from *Decline and Fall*, A. G. Macdonell's cricket match from *England, Their England*, Lewis Carroll's poem "The Deserted Parks", deploring the conversion of common land to a cricket field, and Alan Sillitoe's reflections of the long-distance runner, rejecting competitiveness. Mr Pickwick's Dingley Dell cricket match and Mr Winkle's skating and rook-shooting I take to be neutral as regards the sports themselves. To counterbalance these celebrations of effort and skill and the glorification of the successful athlete, it might have been nice to have one of those pieces written by medical men which state unequivocally that each blow to the head makes the brain shake like jelly on a plate, leading to irreversible brain damage. Or, in order to underline the brutality of some sports, accounts of bear or badger-baiting, bull-fighting (though it might have to be Hemingway for this) or the fighting of bull terriers (still practised illegally in Britain). There are many pieces that have to be there because they are early descriptions of a sport, or virtually the only descriptions. These naturally vary in merit. We should give the thumbs down to Kipling's "Verses on Games" of 1898, but "The Hunt Is Up" (Anon, sixteenth century) has a wonderful vitality:

The horses snort to be at sport,
The dogs are running free,
The woods rejoice at the merry voice
Of *Hey! tinnara tee ree!*

The extract from *Venus and Adonis*, though as much about the goddess's psychology, fears and aspirations, as about hunting, sets a high standard. John Davidson's "A Runnable Stag", Thomas Gray's animal fables, Francis Thompson's "supreme" cricket poem "At Lord's", the section from A. H. Clough's *The Boileau of Tobac-na-Vualach* that describes a Highland pool (swimming), Wordsworth skating and rowing across the lake pursued by the mountain; a few isolated lines, such as those of Paul Whitehead (1710-74) —

Their flying fins around the temples glow
And the jaws circle the mazy blow

and of Pierce Egan (whose whole poem "Lines on the fight between Randall and Turner" is of

very high balladeering quality). All these are very satisfying; and only a little less so Kipling's lunatic "The Captain", Scannell's own "The Comeback", and Herbert Parson's fantasy soliloquy of W. G. Grace in Heaven. Both Charles Kingsley and George Whyte-Melville convey the excitement of fox-hunting, and Massfield the miseries of being pursued. Satisfying too is the tribute to golf: "A sport so distinguish'd the Fair must approve; / Then to Goff give the day, and the evening to love." Alan Ross's nostalgic, lighthearted "Cricket at Oxford" deserves a place. Yeats's "The Fisherman" is a fine poem, but more about politics than sport. Poetically, the eighteenth century doesn't come very well out of it (though its prose-writers are unbeatable). Even Pope comes out boring: "The Youth rash eager to the Sylvan War", no better than William Somerville (an otter is "this subtle speller of the beaver kind"). Nor, for that matter, does Auden's "Hunting Season" do much better, apart from the last two lines: "Postpones his dying with a dish / Of several suffocated fish".

The prose has its expected successes: Robert Surtees, Isaac Walton (supported by his poet friends Weaver and Cotton), Byron (not known to fail), Hazlitt, George Borrow, Jack London, P. G. Wodehouse, and two terrific surprises — an account of Captain Webb's swim across the Channel from *The Country Gentleman's Newspaper* of August 1875 and Colman's description of his descent from a peak in Eskdale near Scafell. Both these, and particularly the latter, have the actuality of great reporting. Coleridge's punctuation helps:

So I began to suspect that I ought not to go on / Yet then unfortunately tho' I could with ease drop down a smooth Rock 7 feet high, I could not climb it / I was on I must / and on I went / the next 3 drops were not half a Foot, at least not a foot more than my own height / but every drop increased the Palsy of my limbs — I shook all over, Heaven knows without the least influence of Fear / and now I had only two more to drop down / to return was impossible — but of these two the first was tremendous /

The prize fights are more exciting than the fishing. The football is not as interesting as you might expect ("What a match it has been!", *Tom Brown's Schoolboys*). Obviously, Kipling's polo story, "The Maltese Cat", would be too long; but the extract from "The Bull That Thought" (I know it's not the same sport) is a poor substitute. Cricket suffers now, in these faraway descriptions, from the fact that if you have a television set you can actually see Botham at work — whereas Jessop, his predecessor, is only a name and a few glowing graphs.

As water is in water

Lols Potter

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
The Complete Works
General Editors: Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor
1,432pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £19.95.
0198129262

The Complete Works
Original-spelling edition
General Editors: Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor
1,436pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £75.
01981291X

Suddenly everyone is editing Shakespeare: why? One reason may be that current literary criticism is much more interested in conflict than in consensus. A parallel development in textual scholarship has been the attack on the editorial practice of combining preferred readings from two or more early texts to make an "ideal" or "conflated" one. Not only the interpretation of a text, but its very words, are now seen as produced by, not transcending, their context (the printing house, the theatre, the threat of censorship and so on). But, if the emphasis on conflict reflects the influence of Marxist theory, its consequence in practice has been to create a publishing rivalry which is a triumph of consumerism.

Of the various teams engaged in the re-editing programme, the one most strongly opposed to the consensus tradition is the one working, under the direction of Stanley Wells, on the Oxford Shakespeare project. The project takes two forms: a series of one-play volumes, all in progress, and a one-volume *Complete Works* in two versions, modernized and old-spelling. The one-play editions have varied in degrees of daring, but Gary Taylor's *Henry V* gave an indication of the kind of thinking that was being devoted to the *Complete Works* by its small team (the two general editors, plus John Lowett and William Montgomery). Various monographs and articles published while the work was in progress, along with some advance leaks — especially Taylor's claims for the "new" Shakespeare poem "Shall I die?" (defended and contested in the *TLS*, December 20, 1985 *et seq.*) — made it clear that this edition was to be radically different from its predecessors. It doesn't disappoint expectations.

The Oxford edition will probably be best remembered as the one in which Falstaff is called Oldcastle in *1 Henry IV* and there are two plays called *King Lear*. A glance at the table of contents and the lists of dramatic persons reveals many other surprises. The last two of what are usually called the *Henry VI* plays appear under the titles of their Quarto editions, *The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York and the Good King Henry the Sixth; Henry VIII* is now merely the subtitle of *All is True*, though other titles apparently used in the period (*Beatrice and Benedick*, *Malvollio*) are not given the same authority. Italian names like Petruccio and Brabantio (but not Lucenlio) are spelled in a way (Petrucchio, Brabantio) more likely to ensure correct pronunciation. The heroine of *Cymbeline* is called Innogen, and a number of women may have to live with the discovery that they were named after a misprint.

These are minor matters, however, compared with the editors' contentions about the Shakespearean canon. Their combing of commonplace books and anthologies of the period has yielded not only "Shall I die?" but a few other short poems, printed here for the first time, and new versions of Sonnets 2 and 106. Attribution to Shakespeare, in the case of poems, has been purely a matter of external evidence: they must be "explicitly ascribed to him either in his lifetime or not long afterwards". With plays, however, the editors are prepared to accept "internal evidence" and "stylistic grounds". It is on this basis alone that Thomas Middleton is named as the reviser of both *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth* and as Shakespeare's collaborator on *Timon of Athens*. Middleton's reputation has been steadily rising since 1960, largely as the result of some outstanding productions, but this is the most astonishing claim yet made for him.

Internal evidence is also invoked to explain the new chronology of the plays, with *All is True* that *Ends Well* occurring between *Othello* and *Timon of Athens* and *The Winter's Tale* preceding rather than following *Cymbeline*. Breaking with the generic ordering of the First Folio, on which most succeeding one-volume editions have been based, the Oxford edition has the courage of its own chronology, beginning with *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and ending with *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Of course, no chronology can account for revisions, and the editors abandon their principle in the case of *Lear*, whose second version they date between *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*. The new order has some awkward consequences, since what are usually called the second and third parts of *Henry VI* now precede Part One. Readers can, of course, read the contents in any way they choose, but they are clearly invited to take more interest in the author's "development" than in the narrative sequence of his works.

In other respects, it is difficult to know what kind of reader the editors have in mind. The books are handsomely produced, but their resulting size, which I would once have called Falstaffian, has forced the relegation of all textual and explanatory notes to a *Textual*



A chimera, taken from Alain-Marie Bassy's *Les Fables de La Fontaine: Quatre siècles d'illustration* (287pp. Paris: Promodis, 2903181 533).

Companion. Though both the modernized and the old-spelling text have the same up-to-date general introduction by Stanley Wells, a useful chronological list of contemporary allusions to Shakespeare, brief introductions to individual works, and a glossary (far from complete), the absence of textual apparatus must surely prevent either of them from being an all-purpose teaching edition. The Shakespeare project was originally meant to include an annotated *Complete Works*, and its abandonment (for commercial reasons) is obviously regrettable.

Moreover, the *Textual Companion* has not yet appeared. So what we have is a radically rethought text of Shakespeare which many readers will be obliged to use without the benefit of more help than could be squeezed into the one-page introduction to each work. In some cases, like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Measure for Measure*, conjectural reorderings of scenes are made in an appendix at the end. But in others, particularly *King Lear* and *Pericles*, quite drastic decisions have been incorporated into the texts themselves. The editors have helpfully provided reviewers with extracts from the *Textual Companion*, so that, in some cases at least, it is possible to see the reasoning behind these decisions. But the arrangement seems hard on the general public, who will probably discover only after buying the *Complete Works* that it is incomplete with

out the *Companion*.

Some information about the editors' views has been available, at least to specialists, for some time. It is well known that Falstaff was originally Oldcastle, a historical character; his name was changed because of complaints from his remote descendant, who happened to be the Lord Chamberlain. In an article in *Shakespeare Survey* 38 Gary Taylor argued that the change was made reluctantly and not accepted by author or audience for some time. Why not, then, keep the name Oldcastle throughout the series? Because, Taylor thinks, Shakespeare also makes comic capital out of its enforced change: in both *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V*, characters pretend that they can't remember Falstaff's name. Shakespeare's determination to ridicule the rascality and religious hypocrisy of a character often regarded as an early Protestant martyr would imply fairly open Catholic sympathies on his part. (Was the safely anti-Catholic Middleton made his collaborator in order to keep an eye on him? Would this account for the need to revise *Measure for Measure*? Perhaps all will be revealed in the *Companion*.)

We can now read *1 Henry IV* in the light of this argument. A couple of lines scan better with "Oldcastle" and the climactic phrase,

Cordelia's arrival in England at the head of a French army. The dialogue between the servants after Gloucester's blinding, which Peter Brook has often been blamed for cutting in his famous production, is in fact cut in the Folio as well. There are many smaller differences, some of them quite startling: in the Quarto text the Fool does not say "And I'll go to bed at noon", nor does Lear die telling everyone to look at Cordelia's lips. His last words, like Hamlet's in the Folio, are "O, O, O, O." (In *That Shakespeherian Rag*, Terence Hawkes has argued eloquently against depriving Hamlet of his last grans: perhaps those wooden Os were simply a warning that actors and sound-effects men should count to four before barging in on Burbage's big moment.)

Conflation of the two texts, when it blurs differences like this, is clearly wrong. I am less happy, however, about the editors' treatment of minor verbal differences between them. Here is what the 1608 Quarto makes Lear say in answer to Albany's question, "What's the matter, sir?" (I.iv):

Ile tell thee, life and death! I am asham'd that thou hast power to shake my manhood thus, that these hot tears that break from me perforce, should make the worst blasts and fogs upon the vinted wounds of a fatherscurse, pierce every sense about the old fond eyes, beweepe this cause againe, Ile pluck you out, & you cast with the waters that you make to temper clay, yea I'at come to this?

As Sheridan's Mr Puff says, "Do you ever desire to see any body madder than that?" The same speech, in the Folio, reads:

Ile tell thee:
Life and death, I am asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus,
That these hot tears, which breake from me perforce

Should make thee worth them.
Blastes and Fogges vpon thee:
Th'vntented woundings of a Fathers curse
Pierce euery sense about thee. Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause againe, Ile plucke ye out,
And cast you with the waters that you loose
To temper clay. Ha? let it be so.

Most editors hitherto have assumed that the Folio passage, apart perhaps from its final question, represents a more accurate reading of the same words that were garbled by the Quarto compositor. But, since it is also possible that the Quarto sometimes got it right, the editor normally chooses between readings on the basis of "common sense", personal preference, and so on. The dangers in this method are obvious. The Oxford approach, by contrast (and here I have had to draw on Taylor's statement in the *Companion*), is to edit the Quarto text "as though F [the Folio] did not exist". So these (in the modern-spelling text) are the two versions of the passage's opening lines:

I'll tell thee. (*To Gonoril*) Life and death! I am ashamed

That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus,
That these hot tears, that break from me perforce
And should make thee — worst blasts and fogs upon thee!

Untended woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! [Q]

I'll tell thee. (*To Gonoril*) Life and death! I am ashamed

That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus,
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!

Th'untended woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! [F]

The obvious question here is how to justify retaining the Quarto's reading of the fourth line, when the Folio reading appears to make more sense. Taylor's answer (in the *Companion*) is that Shakespeare, in revising the play, made use of a copy of the printed Quarto. Sometimes he couldn't remember what he had written in the first place, so his corrections are "partial recall combined with partial revision". In short, he probably didn't write what it says in the Quarto, but that is no reason for supposing that the Folio is a good guide to his original intention.

The difficulty is that a comparison of the two texts reveals a pattern in these "revisions": Shakespeare was apparently obsessed with making all of them, however small, look as much like the Quarto readings as possible. Thus — to take a few examples — he changed "We that too late repent" to "We that too late repents", "This out-of-season, threatning dark-eyed night" to "Thus out of season, threatning dark-eyed night" and "O father!" to "Kent and an anonymous Gentleman discuss

John Co. 116

"O fault!" It is true that the evidence of other writers' drafts shows that they sometimes work in mysterious ways, but I find it to hard to imagine Shakespeare, or anyone else, revising his plays as a forger revises a cheque.

The baffled reader with no *Companion* to turn to might expect to find help in the original-spelling edition of the passage. But this is its reading of the first line: "He tell thee, life and death! (To Goneril!) I am asham'd". As is clear from their treatment of the two texts in the modern-spelling edition, the editors do not believe that the punctuation of the Quarto actually reflects its meaning at this point. Like other editors, they take the line, not as an apocalyptic generalization addressed to Albany, but as the beginning of an answer which is then broken off, with an exasperated exclamation, as Lear turns back to Goneril. According to the introduction to the old-spelling edition, the editors are committed to changing "only the most actively misleading punctuation" and to keeping changes in stage directions to a minimum. Yet here is an example of punctuation which they must surely feel to be misleading, coupled with a stage direction which is not strictly necessary. And, where we once had to choose between two versions of this speech, we now have three.

Inconsistencies are bound to occur in an old-spelling edition. By the time such features as speech prefixes and stage directions have been normalized, an edition is already at one remove from its original. This edition is a good deal further off that that. Despite their views on conflated texts, the editors often borrow their spelling and punctuation from one text of a play but incorporate readings from another. Moreover, the use of brackets in stage directions is not a reliable indication of the distinction between original and editorial material. The appearance of authenticity given by the spelling and punctuation is thus deceptive. In many ways a photographic facsimile would be more useful: anyone sufficiently interested to read the works in the original spelling would probably rather struggle with their other textual difficulties than read made-up stage directions in pastiche Elizabethan English.

Nevertheless, there is a justification for producing an old-spelling text. Scholars who believe in quoting all Renaissance texts in the original spelling have until now been obliged to make an exception in the case of Shakespeare, thus inadvertently contributing to the view that, whereas other writers were of an age, he was for all time. Besides serving this bread-and-butter function, the Oxford old-spelling edition contains other attractive features: the diplomatic reprint of the 1608 quarto of *Pericles*, with which to compare the editors' "reconstructed" text (drawing heavily on the contemporary pamphlet by George Wilkins), and a helpful essay by Vivian Salmon on the spelling and punctuation of Shakespeare's time. Professor Salmon expresses the hope that the old-spelling edition will help to situate Shakespeare in his historical context. This is a laudable aim, but it would have been easier to carry out if there had been less editorial interference.

There is still more of such interference in the modernized text, particularly with regard to

stage directions. Of course, readers will differ in their demands. Professional actors and directors generally prefer not to be tied down by specific directions; some academics also prefer to teach from a plain text and encourage students to use their imaginations about implied action; amateur actors and readers with little experience of the plays in the theatre may want a little more help. Nevertheless, there are a number of points which might perhaps be reconsidered when the volume is reprinted. It is useful to be told which lines are meant as asides, but why should we suppose that Catesby's admiring description of Richard III at Bosworth ("The king enacts more wonders than a man") is addressed "to a soldier" rather than to the audience? Though some comedies, such as *Love's Labour's Lost*, have benefited a good deal from attention to detail, and the stage directions of *The Comedy of Errors* are genuinely helpful to the reader, there is scope for still more clarification of comic business.

On the other hand, some stage directions are pedantic in their constant identification of characters by their titles: "the Earl of Kent", "Queen Cordelia", not to mention "the Duke of Gloucester", who in any case should have that title only in the Quarto. I could also have done without their insistence on telling us whether characters are using the same or "several" doors - something which doesn't bother the reader and which the director will quickly sort out anyway. The editors also seem unduly worried about how to get rid of bodies. The final stage direction for Othello even gives Emilia a solitary funeral procession, despite the fact that she has already asked to be laid beside her mistress, and is thus, presumably, behind the bed-curtains which conceal the bodies of Othello and Desdemona.

If there is room in a later edition, I should like to see all the play titles (now buried in notes to the *Companion*) given as they appear in the early printed texts. While these are probably not authorial, they show what at least one contemporary considered memorable or interesting about them. I should also welcome more help in visualizing the differences between Quarto and Folio versions. Something (not enough) of the *Hamlet* problem can be understood from the editors' decision to print the Folio text followed by an appendix of major passages cut from the Quarto. But there is no way of conveying the effect of the *absence* of passages. To print the Folio text of *Othello*, while stating that most of the Willow scene doesn't occur in the Quarto, gives no real indication of the difference this makes to the play's female characters - arguably as important as the different treatments of Albany and Edgar in the two texts of *Lea*.

By definition, this edition cannot be definitive, and it is a pity that book form gives it a look of permanence in which the editors themselves (despite occasional polemics from Gary Taylor) clearly came to believe less and less in the course of their work. As with the Oldcastle argument, and as with the rehearsals of a play, the thinking behind the text is often more interesting than the finished performance. Of course, there are occasions when it is essential to abandon the dizzy excitement of infinite potential for the flatness of decision-making, and getting a text into print might seem to be one of them. But print is no longer the only option available for an editor. Perhaps the Shakespeare Project should have been transformed into the Shakespeare Program: a series of computer menus, each of which could in turn permute to give versions of the text based on different editorial hypotheses and the different needs of each particular reader. A few key-strokes could swap Oldcastle and Falstaff, bleeping on all references to castles in case there were any more hidden puns to be found. Re-creating printing-house technology in its own terms, the program could try out any number of theories about the handwriting of the author, the shortage of typesetters, or the drunkenness of the compositor; which might have produced the astonishing mess in the *Lea* Quarto. Far more than the printed page, the formlessness of computer memory seems the appropriate embodiment of the editors' concept of their text, not as a fixed and determinable entity, but as something endlessly reshaped by accident and design: not marble nor the gilded monuments of princes, but "Unclassified". As Lear is in water.

Uses and abuses of the Bard

Keith Brown recently described Shakespearean studies as a fenced park governed by a complex set of regulations which have little impact on the general reader beyond (TLS, August 22, 1986). Reporting on the latest batch of Shakespeare criticism, Terence Hawkes describes instead a battleground, where issues that concern us all are in contention.

Make sense of Shakespeare, make sense of life. The news that the current output of writings about the Bard may stand as high as 8.8 articles or books a day confirms him and all his works as one of the crucial battlegrounds in the struggle for cultural meaning. It also indicates a rate of critical rapid fire worthy of the Gatling gun. Medals, not to say floppy discs, should certainly be struck. In either case, no more valiant recipient could be found than Larry S. Champion, whose *The Essential Shakespeare* provides a valuable map of the front line in the form of an annotated checklist of "the most important criticism on Shakespeare in the twentieth century".

Fifteen hundred items packed into well over 400 pages: perhaps the hot pursuit of the *Essential* deserves no less. But it began coolly enough. Almost two hundred years separate the single volume of the First Folio of 1623 from the authoritative Boswell-Malone twenty-one-volume edition, *cum notis variorum*, of 1821. Arthur Sherbo's engaging account of what he calls *The Birth of Shakespeare Studies* aims to rescue from obscurity the little-known textual and bibliographical scholars whose work helped begin it all. Here Syan Thirly, Hawley Bishop, Stanesby Alchome and other heroes take their belated bows to the sound of the "passy-measure pavin" finally pinned down, and "over-scutch'd huswives" latterly appeared.

If their babble, overtly of green fields, rests on covert ideological subsoil, Sherbo does not say so. Yet down there something surely stirs. The pursuit of what George Steevens called a "perfect edition of the Plays of Shakespeare", the mission, as Sir Thomas Hanmer put it, "to restore the sense and purity" of Shakespeare's text, presupposes the existence of an essential, pristine word-board, presently tarnished and distorted perhaps, but awaiting reclamation, even redemption, by means of painstaking pith-helmeted scholarship. The possibility that on behalf of larger, political and social concerns loiters uneasily at its edges. Was some belief in the recoverable presence of an authoritative, God-like voice, making unpuzzling English sense, a necessary, reassuring adjunct of Empire? Certainly, by the mid-nineteenth century, partly as a result of the laundering labours of the Shakespeare-wallahs chronicled here, a clean-cut *Collected Works* of the Bard might readily command contiguity with the Bible on any home or colonial bookshelf; confirmation of a world-view that habitually installed Englishness next to Godliness.

In the event, few alien shores failed to attract their share of zealotry, and the transplanted Englishman and Oxford graduate Joseph Crosby was only one of many keen to give America

the Works. Impeccably edited by John W. Velz and Frances N. Teague, Crosby's letters to show a mind lovingly committed, despite the contrary demands of his mid-Western grocery store, to the disentangling of textual obscurity and the revelation of the Bard's authentic voice. *One Touch of Shakespeare* reveals a semi-tragic Prospero, islanded in Ohio who found his library commerce enough and deployed a prodigious learning to the benefit of scholars such as Richard Grant White and H. H. Furness, whose editions his work unquestionably enriched.

Sadly, like Prospero's, his books turned out to offer only a shaky bulwark against the imperatives of a more mundane order, and Crosby suffered Prospero's initial fate as a result. Bankruptcy followed hard upon neglected debts and a fancy for opium. The apostle of textual authenticity ended by forging his father-in-law's signature to a promissory note. Prosecuted for fraud, he fled to Canada, and thereafter languished in an obscurity broken only by the publication of a pseudonymous philological study of Shakespeare's peculiar use of "though" in a causative sense.

The very word is like a bell. In its subliminal sense, it might even serve as an epitaph marking the doom of all enterprises whose shining commitment to the essential and the pristine must finally suffer the mediation of the social and the economic.

Crosby's recourse to crime would not perhaps have surprised at least one Victorian no less closely connected with Shakespeare: H. B. ("Harry") Irving, elder son of Sir Henry, the great actor-manager. As Cary M. Mason points out in a trenchant contribution to the lively collection of essays, *Shakespeare and the Victorian Stage*, edited by Richard Foulkes. Irving - himself no mean Hamlet - produced three volumes of criminal biography in which he drew a series of perceptive analogies between the criminal and the professional actor. Both are role-players whose double, even multiple lives bring accepted notions of coherent subjectivity into crisis. Both qualify for the title the elder Irving wanted to reserve for the actors alone: "artists of the self".

Anyone tempted to dismiss the Shakespeare of the Victorians as merely florid and overblown will have to come to terms with this collection, whether it involves taking up W. Moelwyn Merchant's persuasive proposal for a "visual criticism" capable of investigating the curious springs of Victorian painting, engraving, book-illustration and stage design, or Ralph Berry's acute suggestions concerning the levels of identification linking the Roman with the British empire in the Shakespearean productions of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree. If we accept Peter Thomson's sprightly account of Henry Irving's "secret self", product of an "intuitive radicalism" in his acting that clashed with the public face of Victorian theatre to an extent that made the atmosphere of the Lyceum "almost licentious, certainly neurotic, possibly subversive", it adds an unexpected urgency to the determination of William Poel and Gordon Craig to sweep the stage clean. Christine Dymkowski employs this meta-

Larry S. Champion: *The Essential Shakespeare: An annotated bibliography of major modern studies*. 463pp. Boston: Hall, \$55. 0-8161 8731 2.

Arthur Sherbo: *The Birth of Shakespeare Studies: Commentaries from Rowe (1709) to Boswell-Malone (1821)*. 203pp. East Lansing, MI: Colleagues. \$21.95. 0-937191 00 0.

John W. Velz and Frances N. Teague (Editors): *One Touch of Shakespeare: Letters of Joseph Crosby to Joseph Parker Norris, 1875-1878*. 359pp. Washington, DC: Folger (distributed in the UK by Associated University Presses). £33.95. 0-918016 74 6.

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Robin Headlam Wells: *Shakespeare, Politics and the State*. 174pp. Macmillan. £20 (paperback). £6.95. 0-333 37590 4.

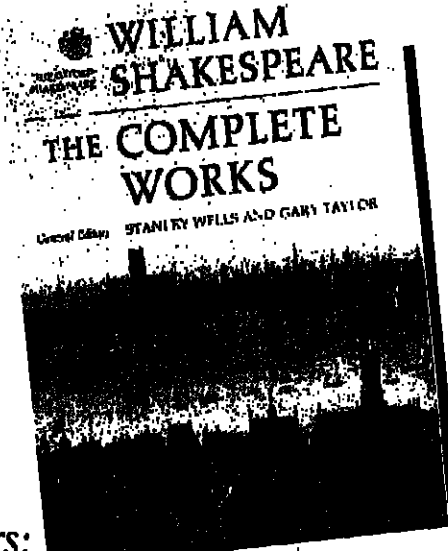
Leonard Tennenhouse: *Power on Display: The politics of Shakespeare's genres*. 206pp. Methuen. £16. 0-416 01281 7.

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phor in her *Harley Granville Barker: A preface to modern Shakespeare*, in order to argue that cleansing on an Aугean scale was necessary to prepare the way for Granville Barker's "modern", uncluttered Shakespeare, harbinger of the revolution that finally made possible the achievements of Peter Brook and others. Her painstaking, if slightly flat-footed, account of Granville Barker's productions at the Savoy Theatre between 1912 and 1914 accordingly makes much of his commitment to the principles espoused by Pöhl: rapid speech, an uncut text and a due regard for the "Elizabethan". True, the move from a stage where realistic scenery formed the background for conventional delivery to one where conventional scenery formed the background for realistic delivery effectively reversed a polarity which had hobbled most productions before the First World War. But whether this announces the entry of a "modern" Shakespeare remains arguable. Irving's licentious, neurotic and possibly subversive Lyceum clearly had a potential which Peter Brook and his colleagues would have been happy to exploit.

Granville Barker's innovations were in any case surely stratagems designed to generate a more intense degree of psychological realism; to make the plays seem more cohesive, more plausible, their structure more ingeniously congruent with what he took to be their purpose, the exploration of human character in action. His influential *Prefaces to Shakespeare* extended and reinforced the focus on character as part of their commitment to the notion that "live" performance crucially determines meaning. The declared aim to discover what Shakespeare's plays "essentially are", together with the tenet that they "should be performed as Shakespeare wrote them", were recipes for a kind of confident essentialism that mocks at the term "modern". The underlying assumption is Matthew Arnold's, that the function of the critic is "to see the object as it itself really is". But in the specific case of Shakespeare, notions of what the play "really is" now have to come to terms with the judgment that the canon as a whole serves as the occasion for the production of a variety of possible meanings, whose symbolic function within society inevitably overrides the puny "discoveries" of the individual.

A good example occurs in the final section of Dymkowski's book, in which she undertakes a comparison between Granville Barker's *Preface to King Lear* and its realization in the production of the play at the Old Vic in 1940, in which his role was virtually that of director. We can focus on the point in Act I at which Lear proceeds to announce his "darker purpose" — the division of the kingdom — and orders "Give me the map there". Granville Barker's concern at this moment seems to have been entirely with Lear's personality. As one report puts it, the performance reached "a clearer definition of character... unblurred by emotion... We have a distinct impression of an old man who is yet alert and masterful...". In the *Preface*, Granville Barker had already argued that Shakespeare presents Lear's might and genius

in the early scenes not in any great series of actions, but "in every trivial thing that he is". Dymkowski comments, "The production achieved this effect in a number of ways. For example, when Lear demands 'Give me the map there', Gielgud 'without looking... half extend[ed] his hands towards the chamberlain at his side'; such a small gesture helped to convey Lear's certainty of his power."

Maybe. But intense focus on realistic detail of this sort saps the emblematic force of the line. The words, and the consequent unfurling of a programme of brutal partition, pitch Shakespeare's contemporaries into the middle of a complex arena in which the spectre of political disintegration aroused by the recently discovered Gunpowder Plot confronts and interrogates James's efforts to present the Throne as the source and guarantee of social and geographical coherence. At this level the political impact of the actual map — a whole culture shockingly reduced to and treated as a diagram — far outstrips any petty revelation of "character" in the seizing of it.

It might be added that during the run of this production at the Old Vic, from April 15 to May 25, 1940, a threat to the integrity of the kingdom was a daily experience of its wartime audience. These weeks saw Chamberlain deposed, Churchill installed, and the famous promise of nothing but blood, toil, tears and sweat. Granville Barker's over-busy concern with Lear's personality deflects rather than engages with the larger issues at work, both in Shakespeare's time and in ours, which invite an audience to produce meaning from the play rather than passively ingest it. On this evidence Granville Barker remains pre-modern to a degree: he is the Bradley of the stage.

Other ghosts haunt Kristian Smidt's *Unconformities in Shakespeare's Early Comedies*, as it painstakingly pursues discrepancies, contradictions, breaks in narrative continuity, and similar violations of coherence. Admirably thorough, the analysis remains none the less chained to a particular sense of conformity engendered by the pursuit of its opposite. An unforgiving cause calls every supposed effect to heel in an iron process which finally extends to Shakespeare himself. Let a play hint at the influence of Plautus or Terence and the Bard "must have been a voracious reader". Should inconsistency vex the plot, then he "must sometimes have been forgetful from day to day". The principle finally works to suggest that texts have no mediating capacity of their own; that they simply offer a transparent window on to an originating mind, whose lucubrations they more or less directly express and under whose control they must always remain. The world of "must have been" has its consolations no doubt, but the conviction with which Professor Smidt pursues his quarry never permits him to consider the possibility that his underlying notion of "conformity" may be somewhat misconceived — or at least that this quality which he takes to be objective, universal and timeless might in fact be none of these things, and that it does not unquestionably



Detail from Raphael's "The Mass at Bolsena" (1512), in the Stanza d'Elidoro at the Vatican, showing members of the Swiss Guard; it is reproduced from Raphael by Leopold D. and Helen S. Ettlinger (200pp. Phaidon, £45, 0 7148 2303 1), to be reviewed in a later issue of the TLS.

constitute a condition to which all texts aspire.

Jean E. Howard makes a similar point in her forceful "The Difficulties of Closure: An approach to the problematic of Shakespearean Comedy", one of several spirited contributions to the collection in honour of Eugene M. Waith, *Comedy from Shakespeare to Sheridan: Change and continuity in the English and European dramatic tradition*. Focusing on the extent to which the serenity of Northrop Frye's and G. L. Barber's readings mask a recurrent "turbulence" in Shakespearean comedy, she offers a crisply argued probing of the gap that yawns between the propositions of one kind of criticism and the dispositions of the text. In the same volume, Marjorie Garber's "The Education of Orlando" convincingly proposes a reassessment of the significance of gender in *As You Like It*. Meanwhile, R. S. White's re-issued *Innocent Victims: Poetic injustice in Shakespearean tragedy* presents the basis for a re-reading of parts of the moral terrain of the tragedies. In each of them, White argues, an innocent victim is denied justice within the play's world, to say nothing of poetic justice in the work of art. To ignore this is to fail to see that "the function of the victims is to awaken our moral imaginations to the existence of injustice, and to train our own moral faculties". Subtly managed and economically put, White's case nevertheless tends to centralize in the name of an assumed moral purpose what in the event perhaps disconcerts more by being part of the clutter that inevitably litters tragedy at its edges.

Robert Ornstein's *Shakespeare's Comedies: From Roman farce to romantic mystery* at least avoids consistency's tidy trap in a persuasive conclusion demanding that the limits of common sense should not be allowed to constrain the comedies, nor "ingenious rationalizations" of their contradictions to dilute their complexity. His challenging call for a criticism capable of handling "a reach of art that transcends ordinary logic" valuably informs the body of his own book, frequently with telling results, but often at the same time in a context which tends to diminish their impact. The case that the spirit of Shakespearean comedy is fundamentally romantic and not, as C. L. Barber has argued, essentially festive, or carnivalesque, developed by means of a complex analysis pointing out the pervasive interwoven

sense of elements of the Romeo and Juliet story in the early plays. But a prevailing common-sense conviction that Shakespeare's characters are after all "flesh and blood" creatures, with lives of their own, able for instance to "give themselves to the tremulous adventure of romantic love", slides towards a slippery Bradleyan slope.

J. A. Bryant's *Shakespeare and the Uses of Comedy* shies away from adventure, trembles or otherwise, remaining content within the comfortable, not to say comforting, bounds of what it terms "Shakespeare's exploration of the human situation". If it comes as small surprise to discover that the Bard never lost sight of the "human situation", it comes as none at all to learn that in the process he not only anticipated Freud and Jung, but achieved a "rare transcendence of common knowledge", whose significance has yet to be fully plumbed. A free-floating earnestness takes its toll of the argument, and the book's engaging style and evident capacity for specific insight fall finally to overcome a broader, cloying commitment to Shakespeare as universal uncle: tolerant, twinkling, and knowing a thing or two about life.

By contrast, the blurb of Northrop Frye on *Shakespeare* mischievously risks imposing a kind of oppositional avuncularity on the critic by nominating him "dean of Shakespeare criticism". These transcripts of taped lectures have little of the penetrating advocacy that distinguished, say, *A Natural Perspective* (1965), and too much of the determined jumpiness that the wooing of young minds apparent in demands in Toronto these days. While we establish that Lear's daughters "never lose their cool" and consider whether or not "Thus *Andronicus* is a god-awful play", the call of shallow to shallow drowns out a number of more acute observations, masked though they be in undergraduates: "At the very end of the play, Montague proposes to erect a gold statue of Juliet at his own expense, and... promises to do the same for Romeo. The ideal... Nevertheless, at their best, these performances have it in them to evoke the type of yore, and hint, in etiolated but still challenging form, at some of the major themes that any culture is really founded on or built on." I think people first of all make up their minds about the play's history, interwoven

them. Just how such innocent folk ever manage to get together and tell each other what are, sans ideology, instantly recognizable as "stories" is not of course revealed.

However, ideology remains one of the biggest deals in town and naturally becomes a central focus of Paul N. Siegel's self-announced "Marxist approach" in his *Shakespeare's English and Roman History Plays*. Siegel's Marxism proves flexible enough, briskly focusing on the fortunes of the idea of cosmic order as the systematized ideology of the Elizabethan ruling class and resolutely recognizing Christian humanism as a significant and shaping force in the plays. But add an admiration for Bradley and a more than residual commitment to the fundamental thesis of Tillyard's *Shakespeare's History Plays*, and an oddly eclectic historical analysis emerges, argued nimbly enough, but confined to the edge of a debate whose actual centre has moved elsewhere.

Testament to a similar sort of historicism, all active on this side of the Atlantic, is found in Robin Headlam Wells's no less carefully argued but non-Marxist *Shakespeare, Politics and the State*. One of the Context and Commentary series, aiming to supply key passages from "background" material against which literary texts can be read, Wells's book rests uneasily, for all its lucidity, on a series of assumptions that threaten its purpose. Chief among them is a notion of the literary text as a privileged vehicle of communication, functioning most fruitfully when placed against its "background". The central difficulty lies in the distinction between text and context, foreground and background, smuggled in here as a major presupposition both of our own literacy and of a view of history warped by its commitment to the academic study of literature.

It follows that one of the main concerns of the "new" historicism, currently sweeping all before it in the English departments of North America, will be to renegotiate that distinction: to relocate and then re-read literary texts in relation to the other signifying practices of a culture. On the one hand this is a reaction to a de-historicized formalism which sees an autonomous body of writing called "literature" as the repository of universal values, of concern to a supposedly permanent "human nature". On the other, it is a rejection of the presuppositions of a "history of ideas" which sees literature as a static "mirror" of its time rather than as a constituent element productive within it. Fundamentally, the "new" historicism attempts to dissolve the modern notion of "literature" altogether, and to merge it back into the historical milieu from which "English" has irresponsibly mislaid it.

In the case of the Bard, this initially requires us to probe, beyond the concept of "Shakespeare", that sobriquet for Culture Itself, and indeed to recognize it as the construction of a specific historical moment, latterly shaped to meet the needs of a professionalized literary criticism. Such a view opens something to Foucault, and in this sense, as Leonard Tennenhouse puts it in his provocative *Power on Display: The politics of Shakespeare's genres*, it calls for a major "unthinking" of our critical procedures, particularly those by which we "enclose Renaissance culture within our own discourse and thus make it speak our notion of sexuality, the family, and the individual".

For the new historicism, the texts of the plays can only function as part of a quite different order of discourse whose contours, boundaries and dispositions of experience are hardly likely to match those we take for granted. For instance, as Tennenhouse persuasively argues, Shakespeare's plays spring forth and engage with a world in which literary and political discourse have yet to be differentiated. Like other texts of the time (the disjunctions between them often invented by ourselves), the plays participate in their society in terms of a capacity to make sense in and of it. They thus take their place in a symbolic field which includes royal proclamations, parliamentary debates, letters and travellers' reports, as aspects of a number of different rhetorical strategies available for the production of meaning and deployed within "Renaissance discourse" concerning the nature and origins of political power.

Not least, the question of Elizabeth's potential

of political power through the female line generated numerous debates of that sort, attempting to work out solutions to political problems in sexual terms. For Tennenhouse, Shakespeare's romantic comedies contribute to the colloquy. We can take them as political writings to the extent that "to write about erotic desire or courtship and marriage in Elizabethan England was to take up a political argument". It is after all our sentimentality, not that of the Elizabethans, which seeks to obscure the political nature of sexual relations.

In a society whose purchase on the world remained fundamentally oral rather than literate, power worked through display and spectacle rather than the written word, with the result that the stage, no less than the scaffold, became a place where it sought to manifest its lineaments and disseminate its influence. Dramatic genres accordingly become politicized to a considerable degree, particularly those encouraging a focus on the Queen's own "aristocratic body" as one of a number of stratagems for the authorization of the monarchy. Where the romantic comedies and chronicle history plays equate Elizabeth's body and the State, *Hamlet* signals the moment when the equation becomes problematical, as the physical decay of Elizabeth's body becomes a matter of national concern. Jacobean tragedy then develops a genre capable of offering strategies for the display of power in a different mode; that of a patriarchy in which the King functions as the nation's husband or father — the role of *paterfamilias* invoking a sexuality inappropriate to the concept of Virgin Queen.

Power on Display is a complex, challenging piece of work, densely textured and closely argued, with an unflagging capacity for urgent and penetrative observation. Nevertheless, the argument tends to make each group of plays speak to a single, albeit complex, brief; and fruitful contradiction becomes the first casualty in the process. Rather too frequently the text seems smoothly conducive to what the creature "Shakespeare" thinks and believes, with small allowance made for its cross-grained recalcitrance, its equivocation, its function, then as much as now, as arena or battleground. The political state it engages with can seem correspondingly static, drained of a potential for radical resistance and sleekly recuperative of the dissent which we know lay in wait.

To this extent the ghost of New Criticism might be said to lurk, blandly unappeased, in the recesses of American new historicism. Indeed, it has proved to be recent British Shakespearean criticism which, perhaps responding to a sharper political climate, has committed itself more resolutely to the business of exorcism. Malcolm Evans's *Signifying Nothing* speaks powerfully on its behalf.

This is the criticism of post-imperial recession. Basing itself on "contemporary theories of the subject, the sign and ideology", *Signifying Nothing* deploys them to devastating effect by focusing on the two features of the Bard's material existence that between them unravel any claims for the transcendental integrity of his plays. These are, first, the self-reflective nature of the text, which inhibits its capacity to refer beyond itself to a concrete and permanently constituted "real world", and, second, the inevitably productive nature and political function of Shakespearean criticism which, while proclaiming its objectivity and its access to the "essential" Shakespeare, ends by processing the plays in the image of its own presuppositions. This overt concern with the historical, economic and social implications of literary criticism, this focus on the political relation between the academic subject "English" and the cultural politics of Englishness, is what finally differentiates British criticism of Shakespeare from its American counterpart. Where Tennenhouse undoubtedly nods towards the involvement of his own writing in a particular social order, Evans makes that sort of complicity a central concern of his book.

For the British, after all, "English" never was and never could be just another subject. Evans's way out of, or into, the dilemma lies in a calculated challenge to sustaining boundaries: the construction of a fictional critical text which then serves as springboard for the body of the book. This takes the form of a journal left by one Edward Harrison, Cambridge graduate and putative anonymous participant in the L. A. Richards *Practical Criticism* experi-

ment, who journeys as an English teacher to British Honduras in the crisis year of 1929, bearing culture, specifically the plays of Shakespeare, to the natives. As this latter-day Prospero Mr Kurtz ponders the implications of teaching *The Tempest* to the Calibans that confront him, so the reassuring polarity of cultural periphery and centre begins alarmingly to collapse, helped by the unremarked tendency of the slightest middle-class drawl effectively to undermine even the phonetic distinction which separates Cay Ambergris from Cambridge: both places where a base human nature achieves redemption through the strenuous application of a civilizing culture, wielding the Bard as a persuasive ideological knout.

The transgression embodied in "Harrison's" journal helps Evans to preach what he expertly practices. Just as the device brings into question his own standing as an objective, coherent, unified critic, so his argument extends exactly that dissolution to the concept of Shakespeare's supposedly unified "characters" so fiercely (even fearfully) embraced by such as Granville Barker.

The promise of this approach lies in a finally transformed Shakespeare whose textual heterogeneity projects the plays beyond the reach of a criticism shackled to the stake of the mimetic sign. If Ulysses' speech on "degree" in *Troilus and Cressida* was central to an older, recuperative kind of analysis which aimed to make the plays expressions of a comfortably ordered "World Picture" (itself originating as a bulwark against the ideological chaos of the Second World War), then a reconstituted criticism must focus on the issues raised in a different speech from the same play, in which *Troilus* refers to a "madness of discourse" which generates the paradox "this is, and is not, Cressid".

Here, in a moment of intense self-reflection, the very conditions of its representation as theatrical illusion weave themselves into the "doubleness" of the play's language, through an unsettling alienating gesture made in that last line to the male actor who here plays a female role. At such moments, duplicity expands from being a moral matter discussed by the play, to become the means whereby drama's own inherently duplicitous nature as art is suddenly and (in mimetic terms) shatteringly revealed.

Evans's book also aims to shatter, and its spiky, quirky mode wittily challenges the measured level-headedness of traditional humanist criticism with its commitment to the sort of moderation and balance mediated by and within "English". That Evans himself, or his forebears as Welsh-speaking Calibans, felt the moderate weight of Matthew Arnold's Prospero-like commitment to the extirpation of their own language and culture (the English knout suitably translated into the Welsh *not* hung round the neck of recalcitrant native speakers) is hardly in doubt as Harrison's own implied ancestry and the reported provenance of his manuscript make clear. In British Wales, as in British Honduras, a supposedly universal English culture can be seen to have belittling limits by those who inhabit (and sometimes feel) its edge. Accordingly, as the lush vegetation of Cay Ambergris reaches out to blur the distinction between itself and Cambridge, so the voice of the periphery, of the brutes, of Caliban (or, as Evans interestingly suggests, of Ranters, Levellers, Diggers) emerges from the occlusion which that culture habitually imposes.

It speaks, of course, not of Shakespeare's plays as in themselves they really are, but in social and political terms, of the uses to which they have been and may be put: of the Bard as a cultural signifier, of *The Tempest* as a "political weapon", of "English" as an ideological stratagem, and of education as the most insidious form of colonization. Make our sense of Shakespeare, make our sense of life. This tightly-packed and politically explosive case amply repays the careful reading which it both demands and is about. If the Bard remains a major battleground in our culture, *Signifying Nothing* goes over the top in the old heroic sense. Throwing itself across the barbed wire separating genres and modes, it neatly spikes the Gatling guns of criticism by announcing, in its cunningly argued, benignly duplicitous way, that whatever the conviction with which we have hitherto played it, the game is finally up.

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Byroads and bywords

Patricia Craig

BENEDICT KIELY
A Letter to Peachtree and Nine Other Stories
187pp. Gollancz. £9.95.
0575040173

The stories of Benedict Kiely go in for traditional story-telling devices such as hyperbole, digression, the incorporation of vivid motifs, celebration of local prowess and so on, and eschew a traditional, more or less straightforward approach. Rapid shifts of emphasis, odd angles of vision, rag-bag impressions are equally a part of Kiely's method, a method that enables him to cram a good deal in. The mixture is often exhilarating, especially when the ingredients boil down to something new and unified; sometimes they remain a jumble of bits and pieces, stray notions and recollections jammed together like so much lumber. Sometimes the author is run away with by the train of thought he sets in motion. More often, though, both a high degree of control and high pressure are maintained throughout; Kiely goes at things full tilt, like the two sides in the annual re-enactment of the Battle of the Boyne at Scarva, in Northern Ireland, which he describes in "Mock Battle".

This story, in *A Letter to Peachtree*, has a good many typical Kiely components – a journey, a local event, an edgy relationship, some characters with strong traits, a lot of borrowed phrases and catchphrases to contribute richness, an incident or two remembered from the past. A newspaper reporter, based in Dublin, has come north on the train, accompanied by his wife, to be met by a photographer and driven to the scene of the celebratory skirmish. The reporter's wife keeps needing him about his friendship with a tennis-player named Alison, a bouncing girl. There are other bouncing girls in the book, some with peculiar names, like Maruna, and one, in the title story, identified only by the clothes she's wearing: "Jodhpurs". Some, like the red-haired Gobbait in an evocative piece called "Your Left Foot is Crazy", are glorious girls out of the distant past – forty, fifty years or more ago.

Victims of imposture

Savkar Altinel

JANET LEWIS
The Trial of Søren Qvist
256pp. Robin Clark. £9.95.
0860721078

Although Janet Lewis began her writing career in the 1920s, it is only after the success of the film *The Return of Martin Guerre*, based on the same real-life incidents as one of her novels, that attention has begun to focus on her historical fiction. Two years ago, her novel *The Ghost of Monsieur Scarron* (1959) belatedly became available to British readers for the first time, and now the same publishing house has brought out an even earlier work.

Also based on real events, *The Trial of Søren Qvist* tells the simple story of a kind but quick-tempered seventeenth-century Danish parson who is provoked into striking one of his servants and threatening to kill him. Later a body is found buried in the parson's garden and the servant's brother, a rapacious landowner who has long been the parson's chief enemy, gleefully brings an action against him for murder. Witnesses come forward to testify that the clergyman was seen digging a grave, it begins to look as if the prosecution has an unanswerable case, and finally even the accused has his faith in his innocence shaken, with tragic consequences.

Many of the central concerns of Janet Lewis's fiction are in evidence here. As in *Martin Guerre*, there is a preoccupation with identity and imposture, and the story opens with a man professing to be the supposed murder victim showing up twenty years after the trial, saying he had run away to become a mercenary and now has come back to claim his brother's estate. Again, as in both *Martin Guerre* and *The Ghost of Monsieur Scarron*, much is made of the horrifying power of circumstantial evi-

The backward look is a strongly developed feature of Kiely's writing. His "Letter to Peachtree", addressed by a research student over from America to study the works of Brinsley MacNamara, to a woman back in Atlanta, Georgia, recounts an Irish escapade – train journey, parochial hall, quaint Catholicism, late-night conviviality and all. The author, we might conclude, is under some compulsion to present the whole thing as an elegy for old, mad Ireland, but his sardonic streak keeps him from going quite so far.

An elegiac tone, however, completely unadulterated, gets into one or two of the stories, "A Walk in the Wheat", for example, about the return to his childhood locality of an old man with a grievance, and the very vibrant story "The Jeweller's Boy", about the making of a journalist. Kiely, as ever, exercises his feeling for oddity and inflation; and his central theme is approached by some rocky byroad. Byroads and bywords alike appeal to him. Extravagant doings in out-of-the-way places: he's for ever latching on to these, and making something mock-heroic of them. The misbehaviour of a bullock on a fair day is enough to rivet his imagination. His temperament contains nostalgia, mockery and rumbustiousness in about equal measures.

He can surprise us, though, with a story ("Through the Fields in Gloves") about a molester whose trick is to spray paint at girls in their good clothes. "Secondary Top" has a teacher whose behaviour towards the young girls in his charge isn't absolutely impeccable; letters of complaint signed "Worried Mother" begin to reach the school. Two flippant detectives, passing themselves off as fishermen, arrive to sort things out. Kiely's resolutions are sometimes as haphazard as the contretemps that precede them.

A lot of singing and recitation goes on in the stories, to fill the odd moments when the talking voice isn't finding an outlet. "Now let me tell you something", says the narrator of "A Letter to Peachtree", as if that isn't what he, and all the rest of them, have been doing all along. Kiely's characters are a garrulous, memory-ridden, live-wire bunch, and this collection of stories makes the most of their ebullient observations and outbreaks of reminiscence.

den. Yet ultimately *The Trial of Søren Qvist* is also different from these other novels, having more of the simplicity and directness of a fable than either of them.

This is of course not to say that it is an inferior work. A number of themes – conflict between good and evil, the silence of God and the hold of the past over the present – are covered most effectively. The various characters – the good Parson Qvist, his greedy and cunning enemy Morten, Morten's idiotic brother Niels who becomes the unwitting instrument of his vengeance, Qvist's beautiful daughter Anna and her suitor Tryg Thorwaldsen who, as the presiding judge at her father's trial, finds himself in the unenviable position of having both to cope with a metaphysical drama and satisfy the needs of human society – are also rendered with great economy, as is the rural Danish setting, in sparse and elegant prose.

Crime file

ANTHONY PRICE
For the Good of the State
256pp. Macmillan. £9.95.
0375039919

Even more diabolically intricate than its fifteen predecessors, *For the Good of the State* introduces a new hero, the young and romantic Sir Thomas Arkenshaw, an expert on adulterine Anglo-Norman castles: Half-English, half-Polish, he is told to guard – and spy on – David Audley, Anthony Price's longtime hero and mastermind of British Intelligence's Research and Development department, when Audley sets out to meet his Machiavellian Russian opposite number, Professor Nikolai Panin. It's a shock for devoted followers of Audley to find that, seen through Tom's eyes, he seems an old man, but his brain is as sharp as sharper than ever, and as his creator piles complexity on

In bad faith

Nicole Irving

YUKO TSUSHIMA
Child of Fortune
Translated by Geraldine Harcourt
161pp. Women's Press. £8.95 (paperback, £3.95).
0704350173

The English word "Homogenized" noticed on a milk carton and a (somewhat unpersuasive) defence of the tea-bag – "somebody, somewhere, went to the trouble of inventing tea-bags, right? So the least we can do is use them" – provide scant evidence of reflection on the disruptive effects of Westernization on the Japanese way of life. Even so, tacitly pervading Yuko Tsushima's *Child of Fortune* is a sense of social and cultural unease. The woman at the centre of the novel is unaware that this is a determining factor in her sad plight as she is of the general workings of the world she inhabits – she is altogether too disaffected, lonely and inward-looking to work up any useful grasp on her situation. At best, the cumulative effect of her dreams and memories is to suggest a befuddled, personal explanation which casts her as, relatively speaking, a not too unlucky victim of fate.

At thirty-six, Kōko is a friendless, unglamorously independent divorcee and mother of a girl, Kayako, now about to enter secondary school. With the suspicion growing in her mind that she is pregnant, following a lifetime of mild, quasi-instinctive non-conformism, but also of indecision, Kōko faces a crisis. Even now, she does so unwittingly, and the very terms of the crisis only slowly come to light: will she keep the baby? Reveal its promised arrival to the man who made her pregnant, Osada, whom she no longer sees? When – and what – will she tell her sister? Important questions, these, as her sister, her sister's lawyer husband and children now constitute her family, a family her own daughter has recently elected to live with.

Kōko carries on with her solitary life and dismal piano-teaching job in her usual way, a way her daughter finds baffling, unreliable,

Model role

Jill Neville

ROSEMARY FRIEDMAN
To Live In Peace
203pp. Plakus. £9.95.
0861885961

The "Jewish Mother", the ogre-queen that Jewish princesses become, from whose tentacles Portnoy made his bizarre escape, bears little resemblance to Kitty Shelton, the matriarch in Rosemary Friedman's trilogy, of which *To Live In Peace* is the final volume (following *Proofs of Affection* and *Rose of Jericho*).

Literally-minded Kitty may be, and the purveyor of recipes even across the Atlantic, but she is not neurotic; neither is she one of those grandmothers who can pretend that baby-sitting and bridge constitute fulfilment. She once

complexity. Audley, as usual, succeeds in discomfiting his enemies, both in the department and in the KGB, to maximum effect with a minimum of effort. One for the connoisseur.

LOREN D. ESTLEMAN
Every Brilliant Eye
252pp. Macmillan. £8.50.
0333422066

Detroit private eye Amos Walker looks into the disappearance of his old friend, journalist Barry Stackpole, and uncovers the usual can of worms, this time involving organized crime, corrupt politicians, hot car brokers, and the like. Sharp narration, good setting, and a nice eye for detail, but Chandler's gigantic shadow looms over style and intrigue, forcing a comparison which can't be sustained.

T. J. Binyon

even slovenly. She in turn pushes her pregnancy to the back of her mind or thinks obsessively about it, neglecting herself, eating fitfully, drinking, smoking. She looks back on her life in what amounts to a haphazard attempt to understand how she got to where she is. What she recalls are the chance elements that make an individual history: the father who left her mother before her birth; the men in her adult life: the man she was briefly married to because of Kayako; Doi, the lover whose child she may have wanted – or whose companionship she wanted to secure (and whose child she had aborted in an earlier encounter, before her marriage); Osada who thought of her as "highly sexed", when what drove her was something closer to despair. Confusedly, she takes stock, but the moments of lucidity this affords are pretty well lost on her: she sees her preoccupation, her irresponsibility, but remains undecided.

The farce of revelation she puts herself through when she is over five months pregnant finally sets her on keeping the baby. At last she seeks medical attention, only to learn that her is a phantom pregnancy.

There is no optimistic coda: our spirits may well be raised when Kōko abruptly escapes from a meeting with her ex-husband and Osada now offers to marry her in an ill-timed but insultingly simple show of male support, but there is much bitter irony when, suddenly freed, she plays dead to the gun of a little boy encountered on the busy pavement. The banal modern grimness suggested when she fails to attract attention by this bizarre behaviour comes as a striking reminder of the very dense questions this novel succeeds in throwing up.

Throughout, in keeping with her protagonist's blindness – partial, self-protective and complex, like a tragically elaborate case of *Sartre* bad faith – Tsushima wards off anything by way of causes or solutions that might hint at simplification.

Geraldine Harcourt's translation reads smoothly on the whole, except for the occasional hiccup for the non-American reader ("fiftieth woman"); here and there, undoubtedly, explanation of unfamiliar Japanese practices would have helped to distinguish them from oddities of individual behaviour.

knew what fulfilment was, when she was married to the good patriarch, Sydney, and now when she sees it shimmer once more in the form of Maurice Morgenthau (a concentration camp survivor) she flies to him in New York, knitting a shawl for a pregnant daughter en route.

She becomes a mother-figure to Maurice and his poker-playing cronies, Herb, Mort and Ed, a haunter of kosher butchers and a member of his Friday Afternoon Club (each day of the week represents a decade of their lives). Back in London, the defiant daughter, Rachel, prepares for the birth of her baby:

"A list of my wishes for when I go into labour! I don't want there to be any mistakes. I want to reach upright, to be delivered without an episiotomy, to breastfeed on an unrestricted basis and to keep the baby with me at all times."

"You're very aggressive, young lady."

"Assertive", Rachel corrected him.

Rachel is the counterpoint to the docile daughter, Carol, who is alarmed out of her bovine contentment by her husband's adultery. A daughter-in-law converts to Judaism (and the process is perhaps too meticulously described). The only son, Josh, fights with Rachel about Israel. The Palestinians are one people, known as "the Rucks", which dominate the town. Denise's family is unattractive: Granddad is a victim of "the Dust", unable to move or speak, cared for by Mrs Monton, a self-pitying and depressed woman; Mr Monton ignores his wife's complaints, being more interested in drinking with the lads and ensuring an easy life for himself. This dismal yet complete world is threatened and overturned by Denise's involvement in a tragic accident: she is playing with her friend Deborah on the rocks when an old mine-shaft opens and the powerful caves in; Deborah is killed and Denise is saved.

The story then follows the course of Denise's life as she grows up convinced of her personal responsibility for Deborah's death. Forced by the suspicious gossip of the neighbours to move, the Montons settle in London, where things grow steadily worse. James Friel's writing is impressive when concerned with particulars or small set-pieces – the invasion, for example, of Little Atherton by the press after the tragedy, "a minor Aberfan"; or his description of Denise's relationship with Colin, who is finishing his thesis approximately titled "Ambition and Social Mobility in the Early Novels of Thomas Hardy". Colin seizes the chance to play Higgins to Denise's Doolittle. He teaches her which novels to read and how to type his thesis. For a while Denise believes she has escaped from Deborah, but Colin is not a very astute reader, of either Hardy or Denise, and he fails to recognize the malevolent shadow that stands behind her.

Ravening time

Anne Duchêne

A.S. BYATT
Sugar and Other Stories
248pp. Chatto and Windus. £10.95.
0701131691

This is A. S. Byatt's first collection of short stories; there are eleven, of which seven have already appeared elsewhere. She has also, apart from her critical work, published four novels. These have shown her to be clever and composed, to have a clear and careful eye, a clean and careful pen, and to be unabashed by being beautifully schooled – indeed, highly academic. Cambridge recurs, as a natural centre, planets like Wordsworth and George Eliot and Forster revolve in her firmament. She has somewhat exquisite anxieties about the relationship of literature and art to life, and now and then abruptly and disconcertingly addresses the reader directly ("I had intended writing this novel in such-and-such a way, but . . ."). Under the polished surface and the occasional hyperbolic fidgeting, though, there runs a turbulent vein of more common speculation, about the nature of time, identity and death. Not surprisingly, in her novels, so many impulses and ideas only order themselves slowly into a pattern. The shift into the short story, at once more primitive and more delicate – the scratch on a stone, the painting of an egg-shell – must be difficult, one imagines, for a writer of such rigorous standards.

Before any critical cavilling begins, then, it must be reported that two of these stories are very fine indeed, and between them encompass virtually all this author's abiding concerns. "Precipice-Encured" is an immensely elegant story, of literary provenance, based on Robert Browning's once not arriving, in the 1880s, at a hired summer-castle in the Apennines, to which English admirers had invited him. There is a shy Victorian maiden, up at the castle, and a young artist-lover who falls to his death; down in Venice and on the plains, late-Romanic energies are shading off into Jamesian urbanities, while Browning broods on Elizabeth, on death, and on the medium Sludge ("At the back is something simple, undifferentiated, indifferently intelligent, live"). The addition of a latter-day research student, introduced as underpinning, seems almost needless: the story really does float like a cloud above a precipice.

The title-story, "Sugar", is of another, more powerful order. It takes up the author's habitual preoccupation with the peculiar properties of being a daughter, and uses her frequent tripartite current of grandmother-mother-daughter/narrator. It centres on the death of the father, an English judge, in Amsterdam (which in turn allows digressions into Van Gogh, who, as readers of her last novel *Still Life* will remember, has absorbed much of the author's thinking recently). It is called "Sugar"

All-round dereliction

Jo-Ann Goodwin

JAMES FRIEL
Left of North
183pp. Macmillan. £9.95.
0333433467

Denise Monton lives in a derelict Northern town, a place whose poverty is emphasized by the wreckage left by past prosperity, the most potent symbol of which are the gigantic slag heaps, known as "the Rucks", which dominate the town. Denise's family is unattractive: Granddad is a victim of "the Dust", unable to move or speak, cared for by Mrs Monton, a self-pitying and depressed woman; Mr Monton ignores his wife's complaints, being more interested in drinking with the lads and ensuring an easy life for himself. This dismal yet complete world is threatened and overturned by Denise's involvement in a tragic accident: she is playing with her friend Deborah on the rocks when an old mine-shaft opens and the powerful caves in; Deborah is killed and Denise is saved.

partly because the narrator as a child was shown round her grandfather's sweet-making factory in Pontefract; but really because it is about the ravaging of time and the puniness of memory's attempts to withstand it, and how our progenitors have to take on the stature of myth if they are not to melt away completely. The story is told in brilliant, firm detail and with unwavering control, rolling the generations together in headlong, deliquescent paragraphs. The roaring of time becomes like an avalanche or dam-burst, drenching and destroying, while the narrator struggles to stand on a few pieces of memory's rubble. This is supremely a short story which does not aspire to the condition of the novel.

Several of the other stories do, in comparison with these two, seem like reworkings of episodes from the novels. "Rose-Coloured Teacups" raves up the grandmother-mother-daughter theme, in six pages, slightly unconvincingly; "The Next Room" has a daughter, newly bereaved, fighting the persistence of her parents in her own present; "Racine and the Tablecloth" describes the despoiling of a clever schoolgirl by an hysterical headmistress, with precision but many *longueurs*.

Others merely bring a highly literary lady-writer's perception of what is happening inside her into conjunction with something outward happening outside. One story ("On The Day That E. M. Forster Died") involves her in a grisly encounter in Jernyn Street with a friend from Cambridge years before; another has her offering increasingly uneasy shelter to a disturbed student. "Loss of Face" allows a more cheerful interlude when she flies out, primed to speak of Milton and George Eliot, to a Far Eastern academic congress, and becomes confused among professors called Sun and professors called Moon.

Two more interesting stories stand apart. "In the Air" is a quite terrifying foray into the Pinter-land of menace. A widow walking her dog, another woman, blind, with her guide-dog, and a youth with a knife meet on a common, and take tea together. It is a quite flawless study in female panic, of the kind now sadly familiar. Lastly, the rogue story, "The Dried Witch", is interesting because the author here throws out all her usual domestic and cultural supports, and imagines in a Far Eastern village a widow, bleached by solitude into irresponsibility, who is pegged out to be dried by the sun, in the standard village test of the jinx, the *lettatura*. Apart from the grandly baleful moment of death, the conscientious exoticism makes rather a dry bundle of twigs, and curiously diminishes the authorial presence.

It is a brave experiment. But otherwise, apart from the three triumphant pieces (including "In the Air"), one has to hope these stories of very familiar turn and rather uneven value have not impeded the sequel promised to *Still Life*: there are so many faithful admirers who want to know what happens to Felicia after Cambridge.

TLS

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"This substantial and attractive book should be warmly welcomed. A. R. Maxwell-Hyslop's translation of *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology* by Pierre Grimal, originally published in French in 1951, is a work at once authoritative and complete. Anyone who has ever lost his way in the complex genealogies of the Greek gods and heroes will value the forty genealogical tables; scholars will appreciate the superbly detailed references to the ancient sources for each entry, as well as the helpful (and modernized) table of sources, in which care has been taken to list the editions which are most easily accessible for English readers (especially, and relevantly, the Loeb Classical Library), and there is a full index. . . . The black-and-white illustrations are copious and pertinent. My sampling of the entries and references found an impressive standard of accuracy; the generous cross-referencing given makes browsing an almost mandatory pleasure, and it will indeed be a learned reader who does not find something he did not previously know on almost every page.

For a long time there has been a need to replace the useful but very outdated *Classical Dictionary* of Lemprière. For factual and historical matters this was done years ago by the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, and with the publication of Pierre Grimal's *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, Lemprière can finally be relegated to the shelf reserved for books which have honourably outlived their usefulness."

— C. Leach TLS 8th August 1986

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Sudden departures

Ashok Bery

CARYL PHILLIPS
The European Tribe
129pp. Faber. £7.95.
0571 147135

Caryl Phillips's novel *A State of Independence* deals with the dilemma of a man who goes back to the Caribbean after twenty years in England, only to find his assumption that he would be able to settle easily into life on his native island shaken by his experiences. Phillips, who left St Kitts at the age of twelve weeks, also made a journey back, but, as he explains in the introduction to *The European Tribe*, "still felt like a transplanted tree that had failed to take root in foreign soil". He travelled around Europe for nearly a year in an attempt to understand the forces that had helped to shape him; this book comes out of that period.

Phillips finds that "there is one story and one story only": the reality of the racism he sees almost everywhere in Europe. During his travels he encounters responses ranging from insufferable self-satisfaction to outright hostility; his account is rounded off by a potential conclusion which explores the consequences of European colonialism and angrily attacks the continent for its bigotry and its deficient sense of history.

There are plenty of things to be angry about, incidents of a sort that can be paralleled in the lives of many black people, and Phillips describes some of them powerfully: Norwegian customs officials single him out for interrogation at Oslo airport; a London publishing house editor refers to him as a "jungle bunny". Europe, he concludes, is indivisible, united in its exclusive attitude towards blacks. The anger is real and abundantly justified, but it also seems to shut him off from some of his experiences.

There is a compulsive, driven quality about his actions which he never explicitly acknowledges. Like the Ancient Mariner, Phillips is always leaving places and people, hurriedly passing from land to land, from city to city, sometimes for obvious reasons, sometimes impelled by more obscure urges. After seeing *Rocky II* in a Casablanca cinema (though why he should want to do this in Casablanca remains a mystery), he is so disgusted that he has to leave Morocco. The vulgarity of Torremolinos repels him; there are sudden departures from Dresden and Frankfurt; and a meeting with a drunk, unhappy Trinidadian woman in Tromsø - where Phillips has gone to test his "own sense of negritude" - expecting to be the

only black person around - is summarily ended when she invites him home.

This kind of abruptness is a symptom of a wider failure: he engages only intermittently with the people he meets, the countries he passes through, and even with himself. The impression is reinforced by an odd mixture of materials: personal encounters are encased in a doughy mass of statistics, routine descriptions and elementary historical, geographical or social information. Much of the book exudes dutifulness. Spain, for example, is described in lame guidebook fashion as

a beautiful and large country, second only to the Soviet Union in Europe. Of all its disparate parts Andalusia is probably the best known, the most often written about, and the most romantic. The climate is good, food and drink cheap, so it has always attracted writers.

Later, an account of Dresden-Neustadt railway station is snuffed out by a copywriter's cliché: "The atmosphere was bleak, haunting, and strangely beautiful."

The result is an uneven, thin-textured book, with the second-hand material continually interposing itself between Phillips and his experiences. It could have been different: in his final paragraph, he describes himself standing on the Rialto, unmoved by the culture of which Venice is a symbol, excluded from a Europe which denies part of its history, the part he represents. It is an eloquent image, worth much of the hackneyed description which he has felt obliged to include.

Passages to elsewhere

Euan Dunn

KEITH SHACKLETON and JIM SNYDER
Ship in the Wilderness: Voyages of the MS "Lindblad Explorer" through the last wild places on Earth
208pp. Dent. £14.95.
0460047191

KEITH SHACKLETON
Wildlife and Wilderness: An artist's world
120pp. Clive Holloway Books, 48 Baldry Gardens, London SW16 3DJ. £15.
0907745067

On December 14, 1969, a small red ship of Norwegian registry left the builder's yard in Finland on her maiden voyage. About the size of a modest cross-channel ferry, the squat profile and determined brows of the bridge-visor matched the aspirations of Lars-Eric Lindblad whose conception she was. MS Lindblad Explorer was custom-built for wilderness cruising and, in the next fifteen years, was to clock up one-and-a-half million miles satisfying the appetites of biologists, artists, photographers, and above all laymen with the desire and means to be dramatically elsewhere. Keith Shackleton served as resident naturalist on the vessel for most of its major voyages. His reputation as a gifted painter of landscape and wildlife is already well established, but for most readers this will be a first encounter with his writing. He writes - as he paints - with vitality and poise.

In *Ship in the Wilderness* Shackleton teams up with the American photographer Jim Snyder to recount the journeys and quests of Lindblad Explorer. Of all the contingencies she was designed to meet, her capacity for sustained passage through polar ice has earned the most exclusive dispatches, and these are rightly given pride of place in the opening chapters. The grace of Antarctica is not an easy phenomenon to convey. By holding their own courage as a mirror to it, the early explorers had the advantage of translating the experience through human nobility. In the relative safety of modern exploration, current writers have only craftsmanship at their disposal. At times the challenge beggars this. As Shackleton freely admits: "There are days... when beauty runs out of qualifying adjectives and one is left with nothing more articulate than a sigh to express it all." But his narrative teems like a shoal of krill, blending description, timely log entries, philosophical asides and anecdote.

Outstanding among Snyder's 150-plus photographs is a black and white of a polar bear

Biologist on the edge

John R. G. Turner

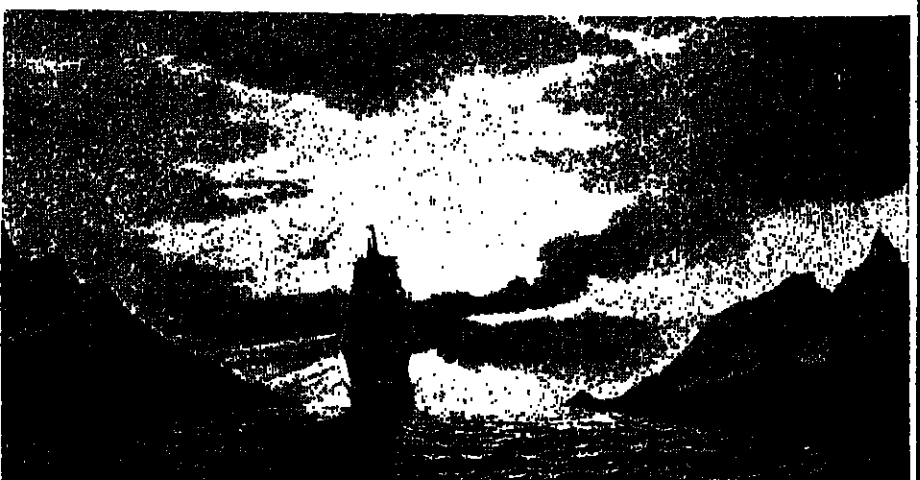
J. MORTON BOYD
Fraser Darling's Islands
264pp. Edinburgh University Press. £12.95.
0852245149

It is as evolutionary and ecological laboratories, biologists say, that they study islands: their faunas and floras are different from those of the mainland, and sparser. Fraser Darling, however, admitted their frankly romantic attraction - he went to live in the Hebrides more to be among animals and away from people than out of interest in technical questions about the island biota. This memoir-tribute-biography is therefore different from what is promised for the rest of this series of scientific books on islands - an account of the relations of a nature-lover with one of the last wild places in Great Britain.

A maverick and an original, Fraser Darling made an inauspicious start with a degree in agriculture (he always felt his lack of formal training in pure biology) and a doctoral project of monumental dullness, dumped on him by Professor F.A.E. Crewe of Edinburgh, on the wool of Scottish sheep. He abandoned his academic career and took his family to the isolated Eilean a' Chlerich, the Treshnish Isles, and North Rona for studies of seal and seagull breeding ecology, and finally to Tanera Mor. Out of these ventures in biology and subsist-

ence farming there grew his perception of the ecology of the Scottish Highlands. His recommendations, in a commissioned survey, for the repopulation and restoration of the Highlands by a change of agricultural practice and the conservation of the wildlife - man and nature - existing in friendly alliance - were shelved with much official embarrassment. Proposals for Scottish national parks came to nothing. The Nature Conservancy, J. Morton Boyd notes, has been forced into ever-greater political compromise: it now operates ski slopes within its nature reserves.

How good a biologist was he? His ideas on conservation have permeated as far as *Biology on Botany*, and his work on behaviour helped to pioneer its study in the field (rather than the rat-cage) much more thoroughly than did Julian Huxley's, but some of his graphs are truly surreal, and the impression is given in this volume that his scientific theories have found only limited acceptance. But the day-to-day life of a scientific eccentric living rough on the edge of Britain is a lot more interesting than the day-to-day life of the average environmental scientist; yet, sadly, Fraser Darling's journals themselves are much less compelling reading than his published writings (I find myself skipping them in favour of Morton Boyd's narrative), and as a letter-writer he cannot rival Frank Kendon, his editor at Cambridge, who makes a tantalizingly brief appearance. But his grand old man will be remembered longer and more widely than his academic critics.



A detail from Carl Baagø's "Snail-ship in Eysjafjordur", reproduced from Island 69. Öld: Leldagrar of listamenn/19th-Century Iceland: Artists and Odyseas by Frank Ponzi (159pp. Reykjavik: Alnenna. £10).

our plates are his studies of colossal icebergs, augmented in scale by glassy calms and peppering of penguins loafing aboard. A startling double-page spread shows a vertical slice of the remarkable penguin rookery at Zavodski island in the South Sandwich group, whose estimated twenty-one million birds make it by far the largest breeding concentration of penguins, and indeed of any bird, in the world. The journey proceeds entertainingly through the subantarctic halo of islands to the Pacific and Galapagos, and the glitter of ice gives way to reefs of turquoise and eau-de-Nil, and penguins to exotic islanders. The book pushes on finally to the Arctic, and Shackleton fittingly concludes its biography with the still rare achievement of negotiating the legendary North-west Passage.

Desperate escapades

Gwyneth Lewis

PHIL DEUTSCHLE
The Two Year Mountain: A Nepal journey
273pp. Btadi Publications. £10.95.
0946983 089

For two years at the end of the 1970s Phil Deutschle worked as a science and mathematics teacher with the Peace Corps in the small Nepali village of Aisenkharka. Atrium was not his only motive for volunteering: "My wish had been to live in a world unspoiled by cars and consumerism." Much of the first half of the book is taken up with his longing for his girlfriend at home in America. Once the affair ends, however, Deutschle's narrative becomes much more

interestingly about Nepal itself. He starts a tree-planting project with his pupils, attends wedding and gives a marvellously graphic description of how the body of an old woman burns on her funeral pyre. These events in village life are interspersed with accounts of numerous climbing trips: desperate expeditions that show Deutschle's attempts to cope with isolation much more vividly than his earlier ponderings on life and love. He climbs peaks, without porter or guide, but compares the 20,580 ft Pharaohmo just before returning to America. However much of his stay he was to begin with, by the end of his stay he was grown realistic enough to ascribe his success with the village exam results to the fact that he has, at least, taught his pupils to cheat more efficiently.

Paperbacks

Arts

HAROLD NEWMAN. *An Illustrated Dictionary of Glass*. 252pp. with 636 illustrations. Thames and Hudson. £12.95. 0 500 27451 7. □ "To take sand and ashes and, by submitting them to the transmuting agency of fire, to produce an infinity of forms, colours and textures, is the magic of the glass-maker's art", writes Robert Charleton in a six-page introduction which outlines the history of glassmaking over the past 5,000 years. *An Illustrated Dictionary of Glass*, first published in 1977, has 2,442 entries, but the cross-referencing is often a maze leading to blind alleys: try looking up "unguentarium". Some definitions are unsatisfactory, for example the one for "baluster", and occasionally the terminology is old-fashioned, as when pedestal stems are called "Silesian". However, Kit-Cat glasses are among those accurately described, and there are useful sections on commemorative glass. The photographs cover a wide area, but cannot approach the number in L. M. Bickerton's *Eighteenth Century English Drinking Glasses* (1971, revised edition 1986), often referred to. It would be a massive task for a reader to trace the history of glassmaking backwards and forwards through this dictionary, and virtually impossible to date or ascribe any piece of glass from it. One would need E. Harrington Haynes's *Pelican Glass Through the Ages*, which is sadly out of print.

HENRICH SCHÄFER. *Principles of Egyptian Art*. 40pp. Oxford: Griffin Institute. £12.95. 0 900 4651 3. □ Heinrich Schäfer's masterpiece *Von ägyptischer Kunst* was first published in 1919, and marked a turning-point in our conceptions of pre-Greek art. It is a book of intense difficulty, even in the revised German edition of twenty years ago. In 1974 this revised edition was translated, and effectively remodelled, by John Baines, and this represents a remarkable achievement in its own right. The English edition is now reissued, with small revisions, in paperback. It is hard to see how a serious art-historian can be without it. It is not merely a thought-provoking introduction to Egyptian art but it also raises fundamental questions about our perception of reality and the way in which any system of art attempts to make sense of it. A more modern approach might be to consider the ways in which sense-data are ordered by the mind, as E. H. Gombrich demonstrated in his review of William Peck's *Drawings from Ancient Egypt* (*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 1983, 192-3), but here too Schäfer's work is indispensable. A very useful book indeed, and well produced.

Biography and memoirs

MOSS HART. *Act One: An autobiography*. 444pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £9.95. 0 340 38817 X. □ Moss Hart's account of his obsession with the Broadway theatre takes him from his childhood as the son of poor Jewish immigrants in the Upper Bronx to a rousing curtain as his first play, *Once in a Lifetime*, opens triumphantly in New York in the late summer of 1930, when Hart was in his mid-twenties. The memoir outstrips others of its kind because of its unsentimental, at times bitter descriptions of his author's early struggles to gain a foothold in the theatre; six rejected plays, summers spent organizing entertainments at holiday camps and winters directing amateur-theatre groups, acting as breadwinner and driving force for his demoralized family. In general, though, Hart writes in a deadpan comic manner which owes much to the old *New Yorker*, never more so than in his hilariously stylized and affectionate portrayal of George S. Kaufman, his collaborator in *Once in a Lifetime* and other Broadway successes of the 1930s. More than a third of the book relates in absorbing detail the agonizing months the two men spent turning a half-good play into a box-office hit, using "try-out" audiences in Atlantic City, Brighton Beach and Philadelphia as guinea-pigs for their increasingly expensive rewrites. But Hart never had to ride the hated subway again and, by this account, earned his release. The book was first published in 1959 and reissued in the TLS of April 29, 1960.

JOHN HOLMAN-HUNT. *My Grandmothers and I*. 200pp. Hamlyn. £6.95. 0 241 12019 5. □ John Holman-Hunt's enjoyable "ven-

ture into autobiography" is an exercise in contrasts. Shunted occasionally from the conventional comforts of her maternal grandmother's establishment to the erratic London house of her father's mother, the widow of the Pre-Raphaelite painter Holman-Hunt and the keeper of his cult, Diana was able, with the help of the certainties provided by her nanny Fowler, to view both households with a child's prejudiced eye. She stoutly preferred the lax, well-servanted acres of Sussex to the dark basement and hard beds of West London, though the latter undoubtedly provide better copy. In this account the, at times, absurd incidents of an unsupervised childhood continue into adolescence and a rich crop of characters, including her inadequate father, parties and debutante life are mixed with tales of death and loss. *My Grandmothers and I* was first published in 1960 and was reviewed in the TLS of September 15 that year.

LESLIE A. MARCHAND. *Byron: A portrait*. 552pp. Hutchinson Cresset Library. £7.95. 0 09 170857 6. □ Leslie Marchand's renowned biography of Byron originally appeared in



Joint enterprise. Two "Moorish women of Algiers" from The Colonial Harem by Malek Alloula (136pp. Manchester University Press. £9.95. 0 7190 19079). The book, translated from the French by Myrta Godzich and Wlad Godzich, comprises a collection of pre-war French colonial postcards of Algerian women - "comic strips of colonial morality" - which are accompanied by the Algerian poet Alloula's Barthesian critical essay.

three exhaustive volumes in 1957. From it Marchand distilled a single volume edition which was published in 1971 and reviewed in the TLS of October 22 of that year. It is this abridged edition which has now been reprinted as a well-illustrated paperback. Though Byron was only thirty-six when he died, his biographer has a tumultuous story to tell. Marchand tells it gracefully and judiciously in a prose which is a pleasure to read. The book is mainly biographical, recounting Byron's amours but saying comparatively little about his work. Nor does it devote much space to evoking the broader context of Byron's exploits. But if his portrait has a serious weakness, it is that at times it feels a little too finished. The seething, protean figure disclosed by Marchand's multi-volume edition of Byron's letters is less in evidence here. Still, as a fluent, well-organized and scrupulously researched chronicle of Byron's life, this biography is ideal for general readers.

Humour

GARRISON KEILLOR. *Happy to Be Here*. 269pp. Faber. £3.95. 0 571 14696 1. □ In his best-selling comic novel *Lake Wobegon Days*, based on his radio broadcasts, Garrison Keillor created a town tucked away from the rest of America, not terribly beautiful or intelligent or prosperous, but suspended in an almost golden age of innocence. He was also a character in the book, a child growing up convinced that Lake Wobegon, with all its quirks and cranks, was part of some Divine Plan. *Happy to Be Here*, Keillor's earlier collection of stories and humorous pieces, some of which were published in the *New Yorker*, includes tales in the wryly nostalgic and richly inventive *Wobegon* vein, but is predominantly topical satire, characteristically mild, and uncharacteristically sketchy. Keillor mimics the lingo of those who have had their consciousness raised, has fun

with the bureaucrats in Washington, and plays with Americans' anxiety that their country is slipping. But his gifts as a humorist are best shown when he talks about an America that believed in radio shows and railroad trains flying across the prairie. The three baseball stories, as well as some of the pop humour, however, may elude British readers.

Letters

STENDHAL. *To the Happy Few: Selected letters*. Edited by E. Boudet-Lamotte and translated by Norman Cameron. 384pp. Soho Book Company. £6.95. 0 948166 09 6. □ Of all literary correspondences, Stendhal's is perhaps the least monumental. His letters have an embroiled quality that makes it hard to detach eternal verities or literary reflections from the day-to-day concerns of Stendhal's life. Even the somewhat pompous letters he wrote as a young man to his sister, offering wise words about life and art, were also a roundabout means of getting himself remembered to an old flame back home. Similarly, a letter to the same sister extolling "the pleasures of a journey to Italy" is mainly a piece of practical

music and poetry were included, though none of the surprisingly large number of poems he seems to have published, chiefly in the 1920s. Sapir's concerns, whether technical or more generally cultural and psychological, are entirely modern, and he is immensely constructive and impressive above all in working to reconcile the claims of living individuals vis-à-vis such necessarily collective systems as natural language. Linguistic thought of this high and humane order we no longer get; these *Selected Writings*, which were reviewed in the TLS of August 11, 1950, should make Sapir better known.

Mathematics

DOUGLAS R. HOFSTADTER. *Metamagical themas: Questing for the essence of mind and pattern*. 852pp. Penguin. £9.95. 0 14 008534 3. □ The puppy-like enthusiasm with which Douglas Hofstadter's first book, *Gödel-Escher-Bach*, 1979, seized upon the abstruse notions of Gödel's number theory, the austere recursion of Escher's drawings and the rich aural self-reference of Bach's fugues, and then somehow worried them into richly suggestive, and stimulating patterns, has not deserted him in this, his third. It comprises some thirty short pieces, mostly from a regular column he contributed to *Scientific American* for two years, here much embellished with postscripts and prefaces, rearranged and annotated in such a way as to bring out thematic similarities in topics apparently so diverse as Rubik's cube, Knuth's metatons, Turing's test, or Chopin's Polishness. For Martin Gardner, whose mantle he in some sense inherits, mathematics was itself sufficient recreation; for Hofstadter, it is a tool which can be used to shed light on the origins of racism, the mechanics of natural selection and the politics of nuclear deterrence as well as merely aesthetic or philosophical matters. This book manages to be both engaged and engaging, provocative and informative. As cognitive studies, genetic engineering and formal logic cohere and converge, minds such as Hofstadter's which can render their findings accessible, are increasingly to be valued.

Religion

JOHN DONNE. *Selected Prose*. Edited by Neil Rhodes. 351pp. Penguin. £4.95. 0 14 043239 6. □ This selection of Donne's prose is elegantly designed, typographically and editorially. It begins with "Paradoxes", courtly fencing at its most dandified, and closes inevitably with the tremendous joint exit from the world of Donne and Christ which ends "Death's Duel". Sermons, quite rightly, make up the last and major part of the book. And the genesis of the marvellous preacher can be traced through a skilled editorial filtering of "Bathanatos", where the ambivalences of "Paradoxes" are driven deep by the contemplation of death, dreamed and desired; then "Devotions", the key text for the crucial relation of Donne's body to God. It is a pity, acknowledged in the introduction, that all except the first Devotion have Meditations without their subsequent movements into Expostulation and Prayer. The Prayer of Devotion XIV is a great loss.

RONALD A. KNOX. *Enthusiasm*. 632pp. Collins. £9.95. 0 00 599960 X. □ This reprint of Ronald Knox's *Enthusiasm*, which was first published in 1950, needs strong justification in the face of the subsequent work of Christopher Hill, William Lamont and many others. Though it makes some fair judgments when it has the courage to stop being arch for a page or two, it seems now to belong more with the phenomena of religion than its study: the Roman Catholic priest, more English than the Anglicans in his poised *sang froid*, peering with a little envy into the warm, unbalanced heart of personal religion. The TLS review of December 8, 1950, considered, however, the "author, in fact, has thrown much valuable light on a type of human temperament which holds potentialities both of salvation and of catastrophe for the whole world".

Reviews by: Geoffrey Treglown, J. D. Ray, J. K. L. Walker, Lindsay Duguid, Neil Berry, Alice Phillips, Ann Jefferson, John Shorrocks, Lou Burnard and John Drury.

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Twickenham: Hamlyn, 144pp., illus. £5.95 (paperback).
0 600 55100 8. 2/4/87.

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Kenyon, John R., and Richard Avent, editors Castles in Wales and the Marches: Essays in honour of D. J. Cathcart King
Cardiff: Wales UP, 248pp., illus. £35. 0 7083 0948 8. 2/4/87.

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Chicago UP, 167pp., £19.50 (hardcover), £7.95 (paperback). 0 226 72626 6 (hc), 0 226 72627 4 (pb). 3/87.

Architecture

de Solà-Morales, Ignasi, photographs by F. Català-Roca Goudi
Academy Editions, 127pp., illus. £9.95 (paperback).
0 8570 909 3. 3/87.

Art

Allan, James W., photographs by Valerio Ricciardi
Metawork of the Islamic World: The Aron Collection
Sotheby's, 168pp., illus. £45. 0 85667 327 7. 1/4/87.
Castillo, Guido, edited by Elizabeth K. Fonseca,
translated by Ronald Christ Augusto Torres
Scala, 167pp., illus. £37.50. 1 870488 00 7. 2/3/87.
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Corden Press, 157pp., illus. £4.95 (paperback).
0 948491 18 3. 3/4/87.

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New York: Peter Lang, 250pp., plates. \$34. 0 8204 0277 X. 3/87.
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0 8014 9439 7. 1/4/87.
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New York: Abrams, 160pp., illus. £35. 0 8109 0793 3. 4/87.

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Sotheby's, 335pp., illus. £39.50. 0 85667 337 4. 1/4/87.
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Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, distr. by Harvard UP, 427pp., £19.50. 0 674 25735 9. 3/87.
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